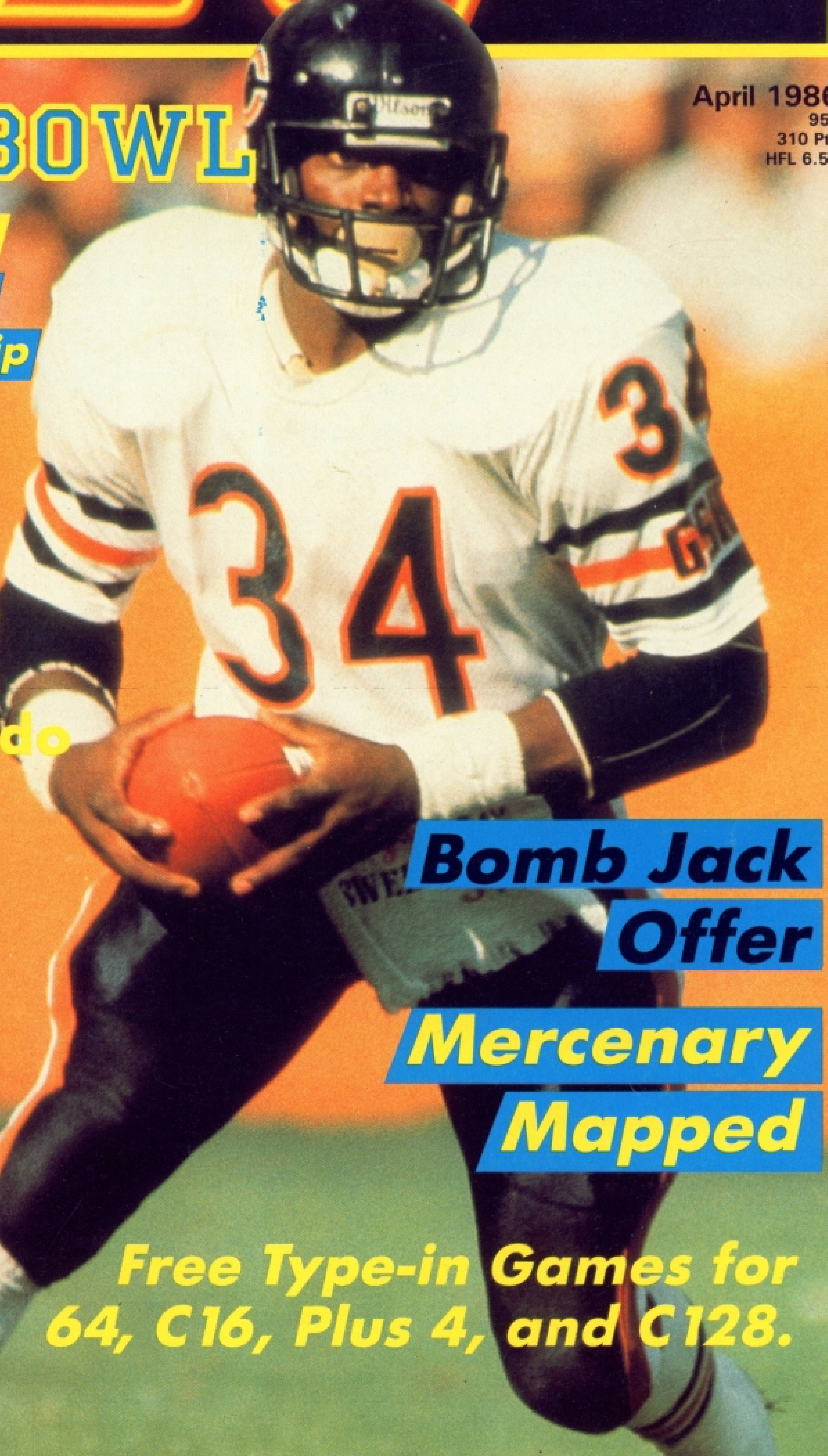
COMMODORE User

April 1986
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REVIEWS
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C16 Commando

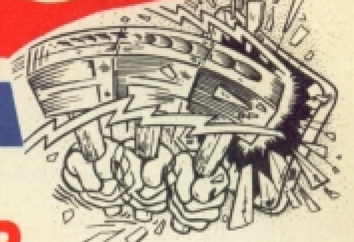
TESTED
Game Killer
Com-Drum
CAD 64

Bomb Jack Offer

Mercenary Mapped

Free Type-in Games for 64, C16, Plus 4, and C128.

CONTENTS



APRIL

PEOPLE

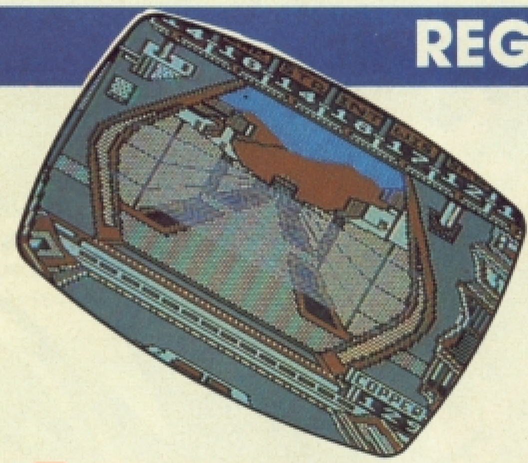
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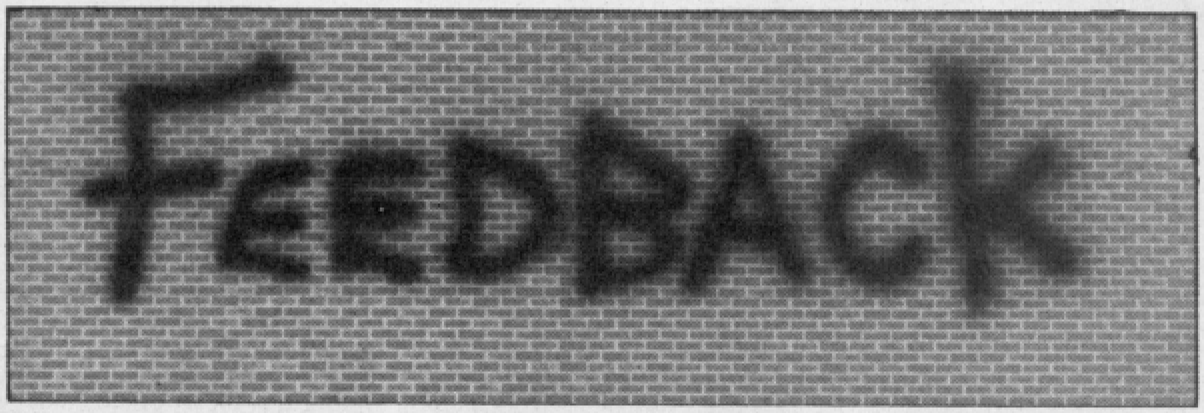
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Commando Tip

Dear CU,
In your *Commando* review, Mike Pattenden wrote that each time you want to throw a grenade you have to hit the space bar. I have found an easier way to do this.

You need two joysticks. Use the one that controls play with one hand, and press the other one's button to throw a grenade.

You could let your partner do the throwing or put the second joystick on the ground and press the button with your foot.

I hope this hint will be of use to your readers.
Jasper Granneria,
Holland.

Driver software

Dear CU,
Recently we purchased a C16, datasette and MPS 803 printer so that we could try and compile our own Disabled Drivers Club Magazine. We purchased a nice little cassette program from Audiogenic which worked really well to make our first edition of the Club Magazine but we could only produce it in words only. And this time we were hoping to make the Magazine more attractive by adding some pictures.

But we are stuck for a program that will transfer the drawing from the screen to the printer. We are only a small club and have to rely for help from any source we can, that is why I have written to you to see if one of your readers who has the knowledge of programming could write us a listing to overcome our difficulty.

Most of us are in the upper age limit and have never had any experience with computers and people that we have phoned have spoken to us in a language that does not mean anything to us. Can anybody help us?
Gordon Whittaker,
Manchester.

If you've written a screendump program for the 16, why not send it to us on a cassette and we'll pass it on to the Disabled Drivers Club.

Hearing Aid

Dear CU,
One of the most annoying things about the Commodore Datasette is that you cannot hear what is gong on. Well, I have thought up a very simple and safe way of solving this irritating problem.

If you refer to Appendix I of the User Manual for the 64, on page 143 you will find a diagram showing the pin configurations of the cassette port. Pin No. D-4 is the cassette read pin.

If you open the connector plug from the datasette you will find six wires coloured blue, brown, white, red, green and black. The wire that corresponds to pin D-4 is the white one.

All you have to do is cut this wire and attach a small speaker (an old headphone speaker will do) to each end of the cut wire. Whenever the datasette, is used to play a tape, whatever is on that tape can be heard. The only snag is that this procedure might void your datasette's warranty.
Maureen Cavale,
Basingstoke.

Hold the Front Page

Dear CU,
I have recently completed the game 'Hacker' from Activision (with a little help from your last Play Better booklet!), and have got the *Washington Post* front page on the screen.

There is one slight problem though, as when I press the 'P' key the printout does not appear. I have the printer hooked up through my disk drive (1541). By the term MPS 801 I assume it means the MPS 803 also works, as that is what I have. I was very disappointed and I wondered if any of you or anyone else has the same problem.
Tom Blakeson,
Harrogate.

Activision had to phone the States to sort this one out for us. Seems you can only dump the final screen of Hacker on the Commodore 1525 and MPS 801 and Okimate 10 printers. An eccentric choice and one that does you no favours.

Easy Enter

Dear CU,
Your magazine is first class, but one criticism. Why does the EasyEnter system for published programs stop at the 64?

I own a C16, and after much head scratching and time consuming trial and error I have managed to enter Blockade and Music Keyboard. So please, have a little mercy for us C16 owners, and make our programs easy enter.
Carol Flew, Bristol.

We all know (well most of us) that 64 software won't run on the 16. That goes for our EasyEnter System. A team of crack programmers are at this moment beavering away . . .

Supporters Club

Dear CU,
I'm a satisfied owner of a C16 and I'm very upset to hear that Commodore have signed the humble machine's Death Warrant.

Anyway I've been reading Feedback and you said you would keep supporting the C16 depending on whether people wanted you to.

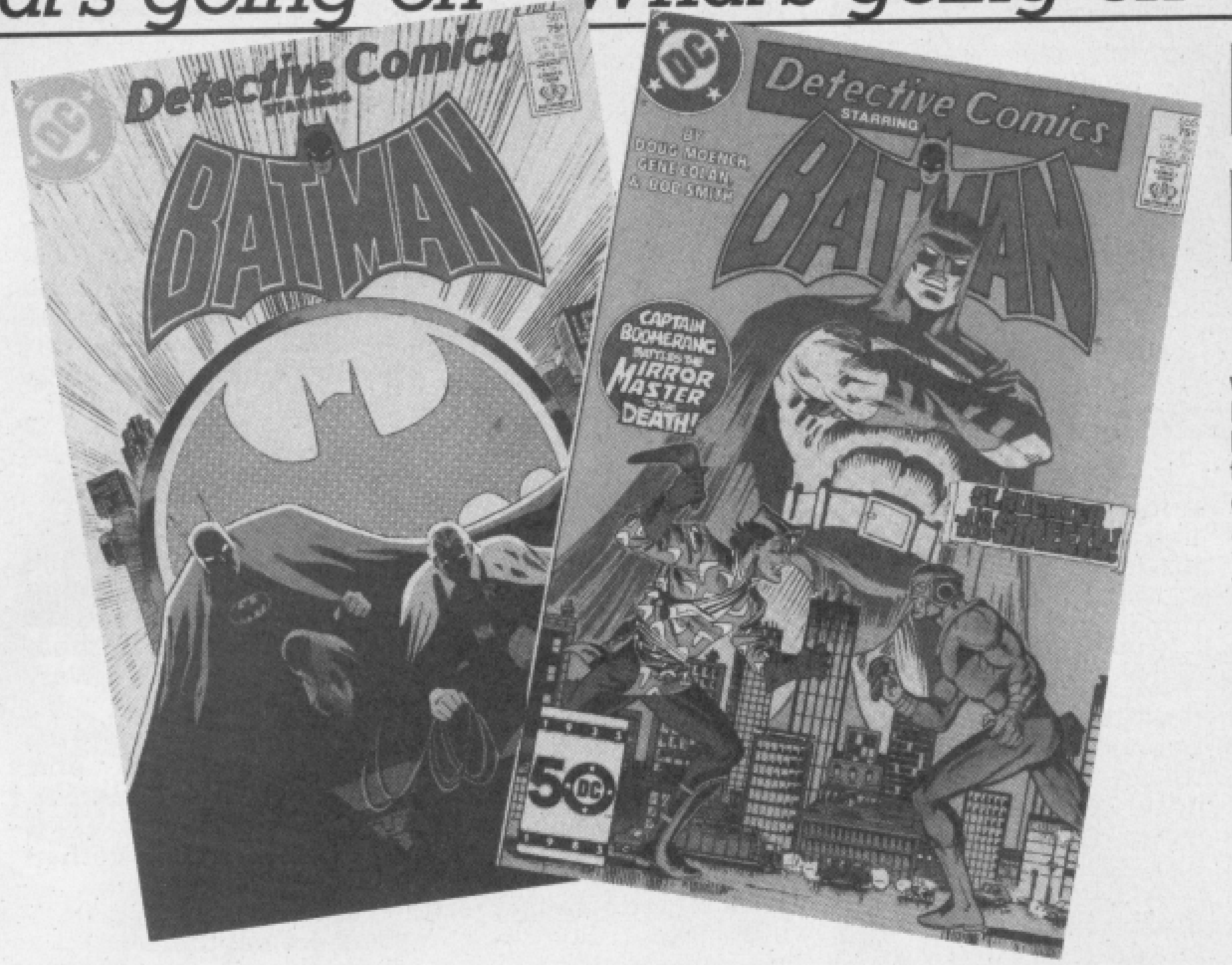
Well, me and my friend (Carl Jones) did a survey on people who own C16s to see if they wanted you to keep on supporting the C16. Well here are some people who want you to keep on supporting the computer.

We didn't bribe or fake these people—
Kevin Coleman, (that's me); Neil Thorne; Yeng Liu; Lisa Pinkard; Michael Hutchison; Arthur Lok; Carl Jones.

They were only some of the people who want you to keep on supporting the C16. I expect (I know) there are thousands of people who want you to keep going so keep up the good work. G-Force you're doing well.
Kevin Coleman,
Cardiff.

We were (slightly) impressed with your huge list of 16 supporters. With games like *Commando* and *Beach Head* now available for it, Commodore may even keep on the 16 in favour of the, er, Amiga?

Write to us at Commodore User and win yourself a T-shirt.
We want your opinions, views, tips, criticisms, er, praise: Feedback, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU



Holy Cow! It's Batman

Deep in the heart of Gotham City — sorry Manchester — a crafty corporation has hatched a plan to steal the minds of 64 gamers. Ocean have announced a Batman game.

The plan is to pit the Caped Crusader and his diminutive sidekick Robin into a 140 location arcade adventure. The dynamic duo are hunting piece of the Batmobile which we can only assume have been broken up for their scrap value.

Programmer John Ritman, who wrote *Matchday*, has been working on the game for fourteen months already which must be a record for any Ocean product.

The bad news is that it's going to appear on the Spectrum and Amstrad first and then be converted to the 64. Expect to see a version some time in May if you're lucky.

All your favourite characters are in there including the Joker and the Penguin. Ocean's Paul Finnegan is promising "some pretty spectacular graphics and gameplay".

Return to Vendor

Avid readers of our February issue will remember our news item on Commodore's trade-in deal for the 128 (return an old 64 and get £50 off). We asked you to suggest what Commodore could do with this pile of geriatric 64 hardware.

Donate them to charity, wrote most of you. But the less charitable ideas were funniest. Like Gareth Davies of the Wirral who reckons Commodore should market the 64 as a *Transformer*, Britain's favourite toy, and turn it into a motorbike.

But the winning entry (you get a copy of Melbourne House's *Rock 'N' Wrestle*) came from Mike Derham of County Cork who suggests Commodore rip out the 64's innards and turn it into a lunchbox/briefcase for people who go to work in a Sinclair C5.

And what are Commodore's plans? Acting marketing boss Mike Clark reckons that charities are on top of the list but that it's too early to decide since most of the 64s haven't found their way home yet. "Some of them don't work anyway", he shrugs.

• Shorts •

Pack of Berks: over to CRL for a Berks announcement — all three games in the *Berks* trilogy are now available for the 16 and Plus/4 on a single tape. Since the complete set now only costs £6.95, you must have been a complete berk buying them individually — a must for the Berk-less?

• Shorts •

More from Joreth: Music software specialists, Joreth, have announced that their existing range of synth software on the 64, has been adapted to run with MIDI interfaces from other manufacturers, notably Siel, Jellinghaus and Microvox. It's also just released a *Real-time Linker System* with looping facilities and loads of enhancements over the version that's already on Joreth's professional quality Music Composer System. More details on: 0386 831615.

Non Runner

Problems are still occuring with 64 cassette games which won't load on the 128. Many games shops are now being forced to keep a list of titles which won't run and ask customers whether they own a 64 or a 128.

Julian Musgrove of Games World in Hammersmith told us that he compiled a list of games which included *Rescue on Fractalus*, *Hypersports*, *Yabba Dabba Doo* and — the most consistent offender — *Zorro*. Other offenders include *Frankie Goes to Hollywood* and *Goonies*.

"The list has dwindled of late", he added, "but older games will always give us troubles."

The problem seems to involve the use of turbo loaders and the fact that a particularly important memory location is found in a higher area when the 128 is in 64 mode.

A quick cure for this is to press the CAPS/LOCK key down. Many of these games will now load without further problem.

To rub salt into the wounds, some disk-based games won't load especially of you're using one of the first batches of the 1570 disk drive. It's rumoured that this unfortunate machine had DOS bugs in it which, hopefully, have now been discovered and removed.

• Shorts •

Tasword for 128: Tasman Software has just announced that it's working on a 128 version of its popular *Tasword* program. Tasword is already unique on the 64 because it offers an optional 80-column screen text display. The 128 version, according to Tasman boss Robin Thomson, "will have substantial added facilities, such as mailmerge". Tasword 128 should be ready round about June.

Hi-de-Hi



Latest brainwave from the Commodore Ideas Dept is a crafty new way to get you to buy more Commodore hardware and peripherals. Wait for it, it's — holiday vouchers and 'bundles'.

Under the new scheme, dubbed "Passport to Pleasure", you get five £50 vouchers whenever you buy the 64 Compendium, the peripherals pack, a 128, 1570 or 1541 disk drive and any Commodore monitor. You can then redeem them against a selection of holidays from twenty leading tour operators.

But you'll have to check how many vouchers can actually be redeemed at once. For example, you'll get only £50 off a Club 18-30 holiday but the full £250 off a CTC cruise. This is, no doubt, an amazing offer but we couldn't help wondering why Commodore doesn't simply reduce its prices — must be a good reason.

The reason is that Commodore says it prefers to 'bundle' up to give extra value. The latest in Commodore bundling is for the musically minded. Called *The Complete Music System*, it features a 64, Sound Expander and Sound Studio (both developed by Music Sales) and a five-octave keyboard. That lot will cost you £329.99. *The Music Expansion System* (everything except the 64) will cost you £149.99. Watch out for our review next month.



Football Manager for 16

Addictive Games — the company with the chin on the cover — have announced a conversion of *Football Manager* for the 16 and Plus/4. the blurb claims "still one of the most popular computer games on the market".

That's quite an achievement since none of us can remember when the 64 version came out — rumour has it that Alf Ramsey played it during the '66 World Cup. Anyway, the 16 conversion should be available right now at £6.95 on cassette. More details from Addictive on 0202 296404.

• Shorts •

Clapperboard: Oscar for the 'most inflated title' this year goes to Ariolasoft with its *Movie Maker* for the 64/128 (actually written by Electronic Arts). Surprisingly, it won't let you make Rocky (five), but lets you produce small animated sequences that combine graphics, music and text. It comes only on two disks and costs £16.95. We'll be shooting on location as soon as we get one. Cut.

• Shorts •

Rocky Horror for 128: CRL reckons you'll be able to "do the time-warp" in 128 mode this May, when it releases a new version of *The Rocky Horrow Show* for the 128. It should offer new and additional features to the original. No prices yet, though, but you can contact CRL on 01-533 2918.

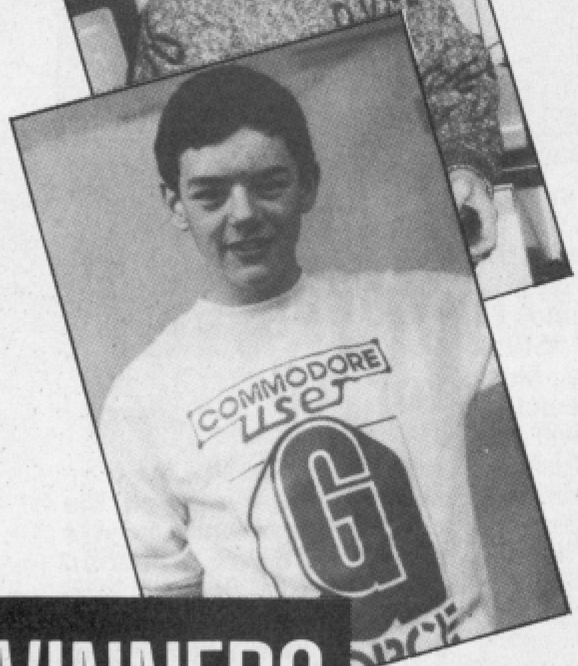
• Shorts •

Commodore Show-time: Doesn't time fly — it doesn't seem a year since we pushed and shoved our way through the last Commodore Show. Well, Show number 7 is now looming on the horizon. Fixed for 9-11th May, at the usual venue: The Novotel in Hammersmith, London. Obviously the Amiga will be the main attraction. But we'll give you a complete preview in the next issue.

G FORCE NEW RECRUITS







Step up to the rostrum please *Ferdy Hamilton, Colm Clarke,* and *Richard Bradbury* — winners of our search to find a new recruit for our elite team of reviewers — the G Force.

When we whittled the sack full of entries down to these final three we just couldn't choose between them. They are all such excellent game players that the G Force has taken them all on — and you can read their reviews in this issue.

Here are the new boys' likes and dislikes:

Colm Clarke hails from Leeds where he attends Mount St. Mary's High School.
Age: 16
Family: Two younger sisters Fiona and Sarah, Mum, Dad, and a hamster called Butlin.
Fave Games: *Boulderdash* "It's my all time favourite", *Impossible Mission, Revs, Who Dares Wins II, Bruce Lee, Theatre Europe.*
Most disappointing games ever bought: *Beachead II* "I almost took it back to the shop", and *Elite,* "it's so slow to play".
When not blasting aliens I like: Cycling "I've cycled to Halifax and Wakefield and I'm cycling to Filey in the Summer with a friend for a week's camping after the exams."
Fave TV Prog: Spitting Image.
Fave music: Big Country.

Richard Bradbury is the only Welshman in the G Force. He lives in Fishguard on the beautiful Pembrokeshire coast.
Age: 14
Family: One younger sister called Sally.
School: Fishguard Secondary.
Fave Game: *Mercenary* and *Little Computer People.*
Hobbies: Cycling and playing football. "I am also in the sea cadets, so I've done some sailing".
Fave TV Progs: Comedies.
Fave Music: Billy Idol.

Ferdy Hamilton is the cheeky cockney in the lineup. An East Enders fan and QPR supporter.
Age: 14.
Family: One older brother called Philip.
Fave Games: *Uridium, Fist, Who Dares Wins II.*
Most disappointing game ever bought: *Buck Rogers* "it's so slow and repetitive".
Hobbies: I like football and support QPR.
Fave TV Programme: East Enders.
Fave Music: Dire Straits, Bruce Springsteen, Huey Lewis and the News, and Madness.

WINNERS

Play Better Comp

We asked you to identify seven sectioned screens from games in our February Play Better supplement.

In case you were in doubt the seven games were a) *Quake Minus 1;* b) *Ghostbusters;* c) *Impossible Mission* d) *Way of the Exploding Fist* e) *Spy vs Spy II (Island Caper);* f) *Strangeloop;* g) *Summer Games I.*

There were some sneaky ones in there which caught quite a few of you out. Nevertheless there were plenty of winners. First out of the bag were:

James Blonden Plymouth Devon, Nicholas Jinks Smeeth Kent, James Oatham Camberley Surrey, Victor Love Strabane Co. Tyrone, Michael Bradley Yatton Bristol, Mark White Basildon Essex, Martin Graham Glasgow, Max Johnson Crosspool Sheffield, E820241 Sac Eccles Mesg. Supply Sqn. RAF Wildenrath, Peter Joley Arklow Co. Wicklow.

Golden Fleece Competition

Our February Adventure Competition offered you the chance to win All American Adventure's *Ulysees and the Golden Fleece,* and Duckworth's *The Odyssey*. In the spirit of the games we asked you to tell us who Odysseus' wife was. The answer which you Hellenes all got was Penelope.

Robert Larkin Co. Dublin, Christopher Dawson Southend-on-Sea Essex, Spencer Gardner Verwood Dorset, John Birch Shevington Wigan Lancs, Mrs T Dutton Westerham Kent.

V Competition

Our V Competition proved to be a massive hit with you all. Sackloads of entries from dedicated V fans told us the answers we wanted to hear. In case you watched the Olympics they were:-

1) Lydia and Diana
2) Elizabeth
3) Two possible answers here, you could have had Philip or Martin, Martin took over when Philip was killed. Only one of you got this, so there's an extra prize for you — pity you didn't tell us your name.
4) Freedom Network
5) Deadly Red Dust

The lucky winners were:-

Mark Busby Kingstanding Birmingham, Stephen Green Upton-by-Cheshire Cheshire, Kevin Ogden Wisbech Cambs, Richard Vidal Kensel Green London, Mr D Brant Halesowen W Midlands, Peter Sawyer Stamford Lincs, RL Chambers Clifton York, R Clarket Hainault Essex, Jason Paul Spittle Kings Norton Birmingham, Richard Armit Hodge Hill Birmingham, Bryan Emmerson Waterlooville Hants, Richard Walker Dudley West Midlands, Stephen Fowles Malvern Worcs, Richard Mills Basingstoke, Hants, Paul S Morris Kings Lynn Norfolk, Nigel Hood Dereham Norfolk, Keith Underwood Nuneaton Warwickshire, Mr S Stacy Enfield Middlesex, Dean Clark Chesterfield Derbyshire, Mr G R Cousins Burghill Hereford, John R Creasy Benfleet Essex, Rory Fairburn Aberdeen Scotland, Richard Lassey Scarborough North Yorkshire, Mark Boden Morley Leeds, Mike Jones Hinckley Leics, Tony Cartwright Scarborough N. Yorks, Nicola Bennett Swinton S. Yorkshire, Kamal Sharma Bewdly Worcs, S A Gower Dyfed S. Wales.

WINNERS

Garry Kitchen's

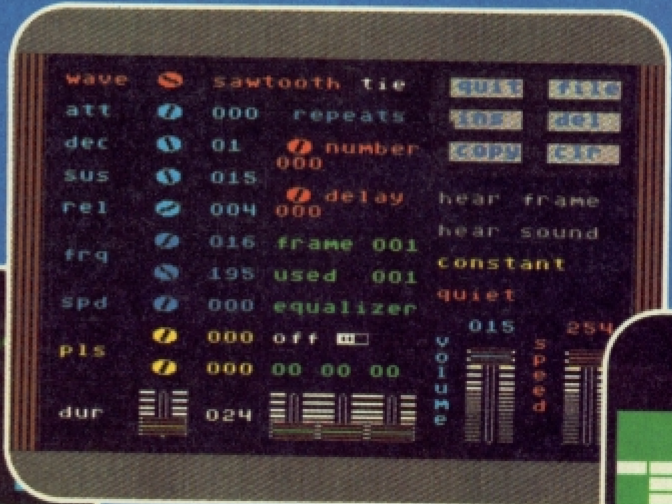
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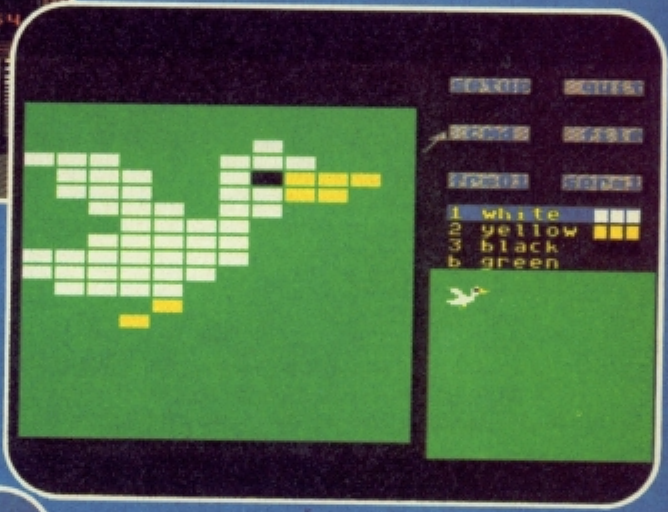
SceneMaker. Create the background scenes for your game. Either use scenes that have been pre-programmed or create scenes of your own.



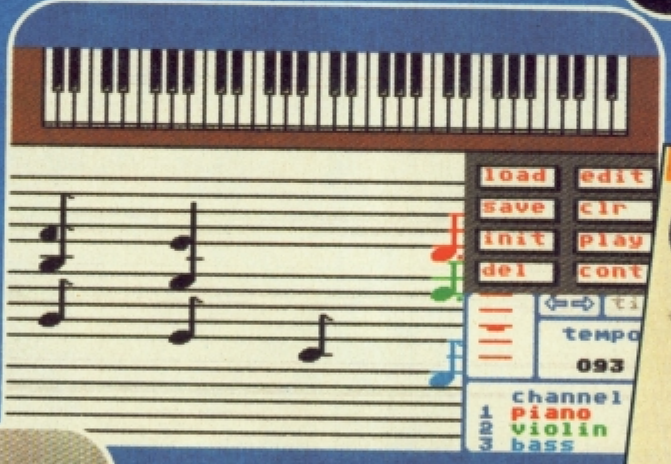


SoundMaker. Smashing, blasting, singing, whooshing and a whole lot more can be created, or you can select from a variety of commonly-used effects already created for you.

SpriteMaker. Create the characters or objects that move in your game. Use full animation to make them life-like. You can select from many pre-programmed sprites or you can create almost any kind you can imagine.



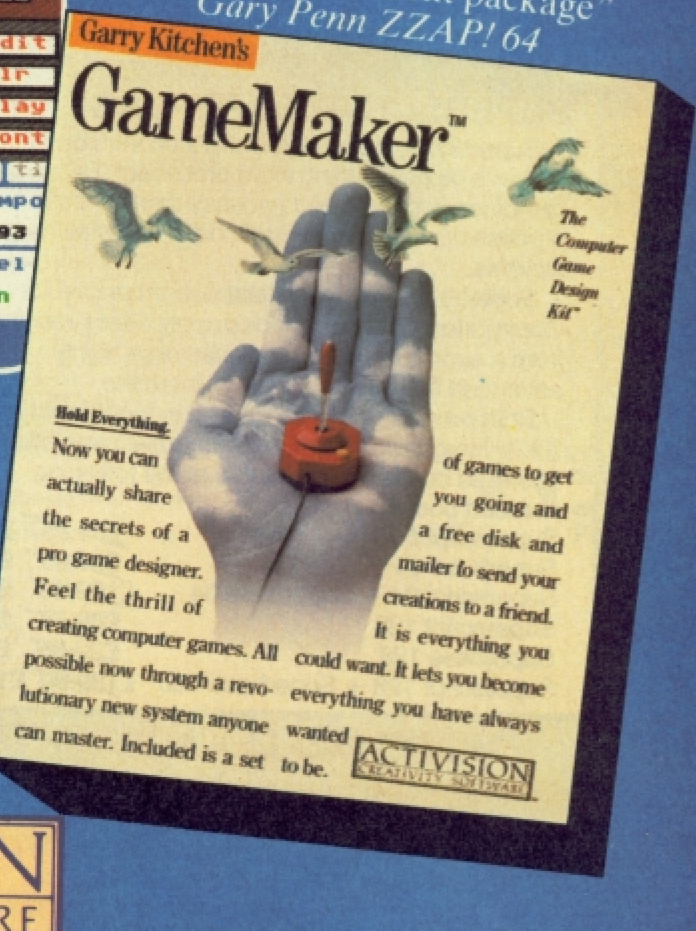
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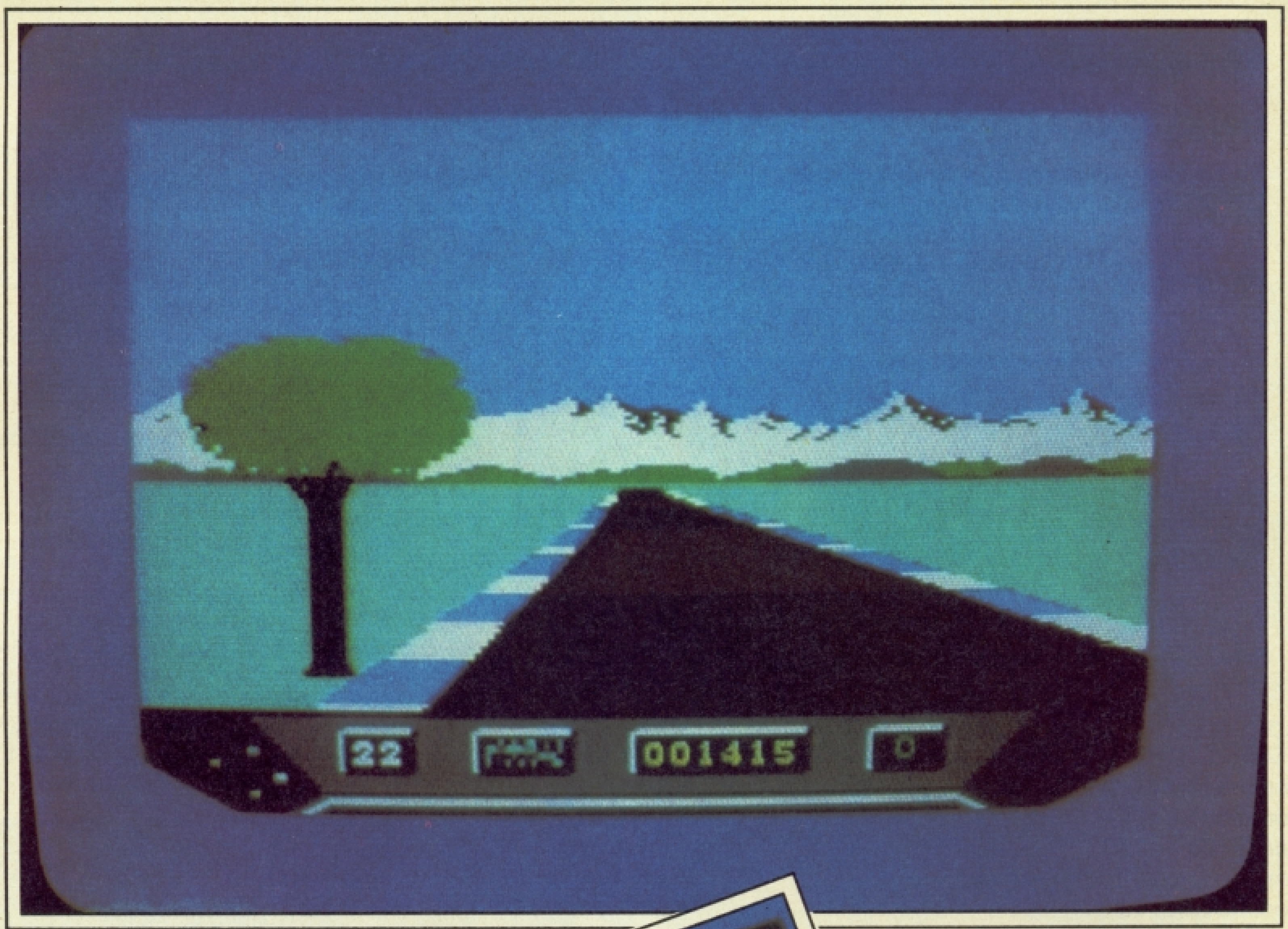
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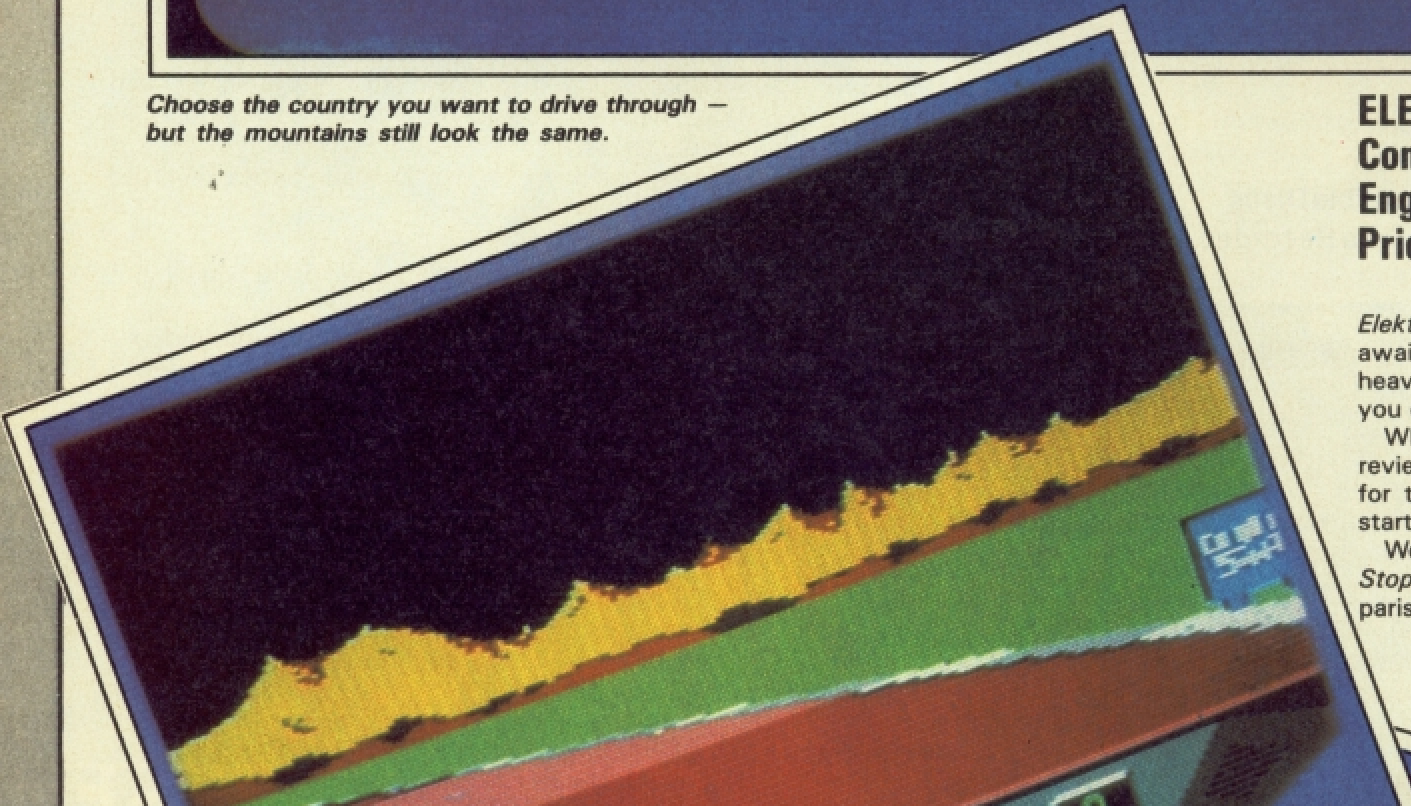
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Choose the country you want to drive through — but the mountains still look the same.





ELEKTRA GLIDE
Commodore 64/128
English Software
Price: £8.95/disk

Elektra Glide is one of those long awaited, much talked about, and heavily previewed games that you expect a lot of.

When I sat down to play my review copy I could hardly wait for the tape to load so I could start racing.

Would it be better than *Pit Stop II* and *Speed King*? Comparisons with the Epyx game are

actually invited by the cassette inlay which encourages you to "forget pitstops, refuelling, tyre changes and over-taking".

Playing Elektra Glide is the first racing game where "the experience of playing the game is everything", you are told. They must be confident I am thinking.

This belief is encouraged when the game loads. A beautiful, colourful landscape appears with some of the fastest moving track I've ever seen on any racing game, including Arcade's *Pole Position*.

Trouble is it looks a lot better than it plays.

The problems begin the moment you try to start a game. You must select the country you want to race in (America, Australia, or England). I chose England just to be patriotic — not that it matters much once you get into the game as they all race pretty similarly — even if the scenery is different.

You also select the level of responsiveness through choosing one of three "Steering Control Envelopes". Why they couldn't just be called 1, 2 and 3 is anybody's guess.

I could have forgiven the "Envelopes" if they had worked properly. I tried three different joysticks and all of them required a great deal of yanking in all directions to get the game up and running.

Once you do get started you will find the game fast and furious and the graphics impressive. The trouble is the steering is just not responsive enough on any of the levels.

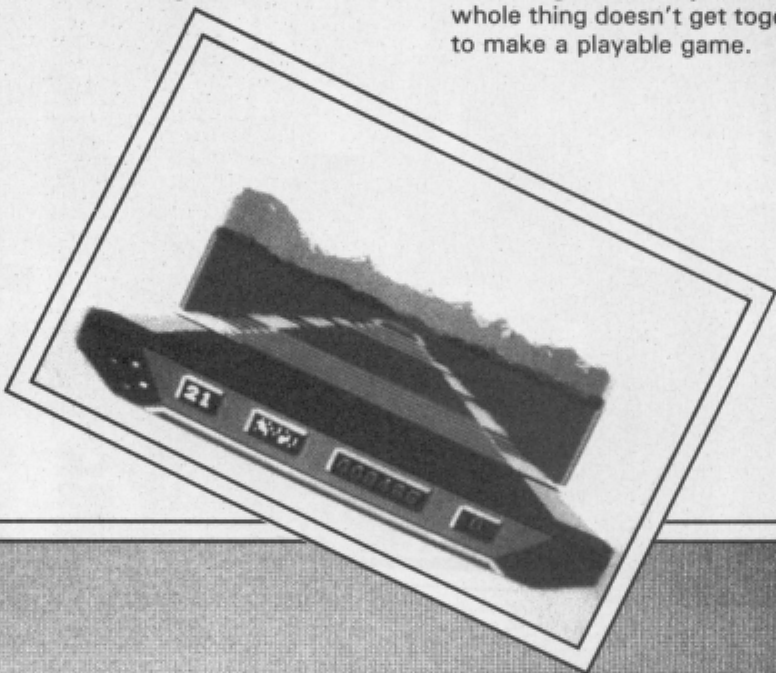
You never appear to spin off the track altogether; you just slow down until finally you shudder to a halt.

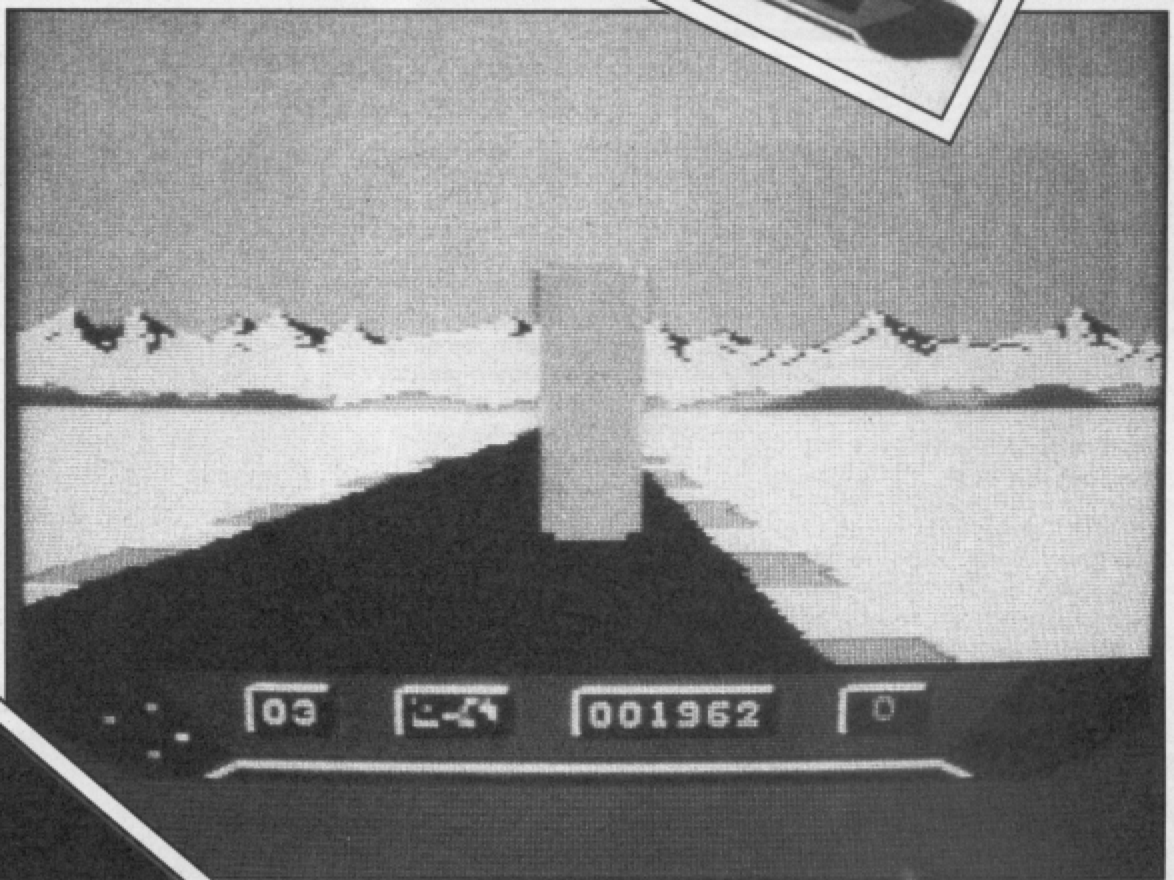
There is too much slowing down of the action for my taste. Because of the lack of responsiveness mentioned above, it is difficult to dodge some of the obstacles that loom up in the road in front of you. And crash — once you hit something you must endure the worst punishment any racing game can dole out — stopping!

The aim of the game is simplicity itself. "Stay on the track at all costs, and reach the tunnel leading to the start of the next section". That's it. There are controls on the dash — but apart from a rather sluggish speed indicator they don't serve any purpose in the game.

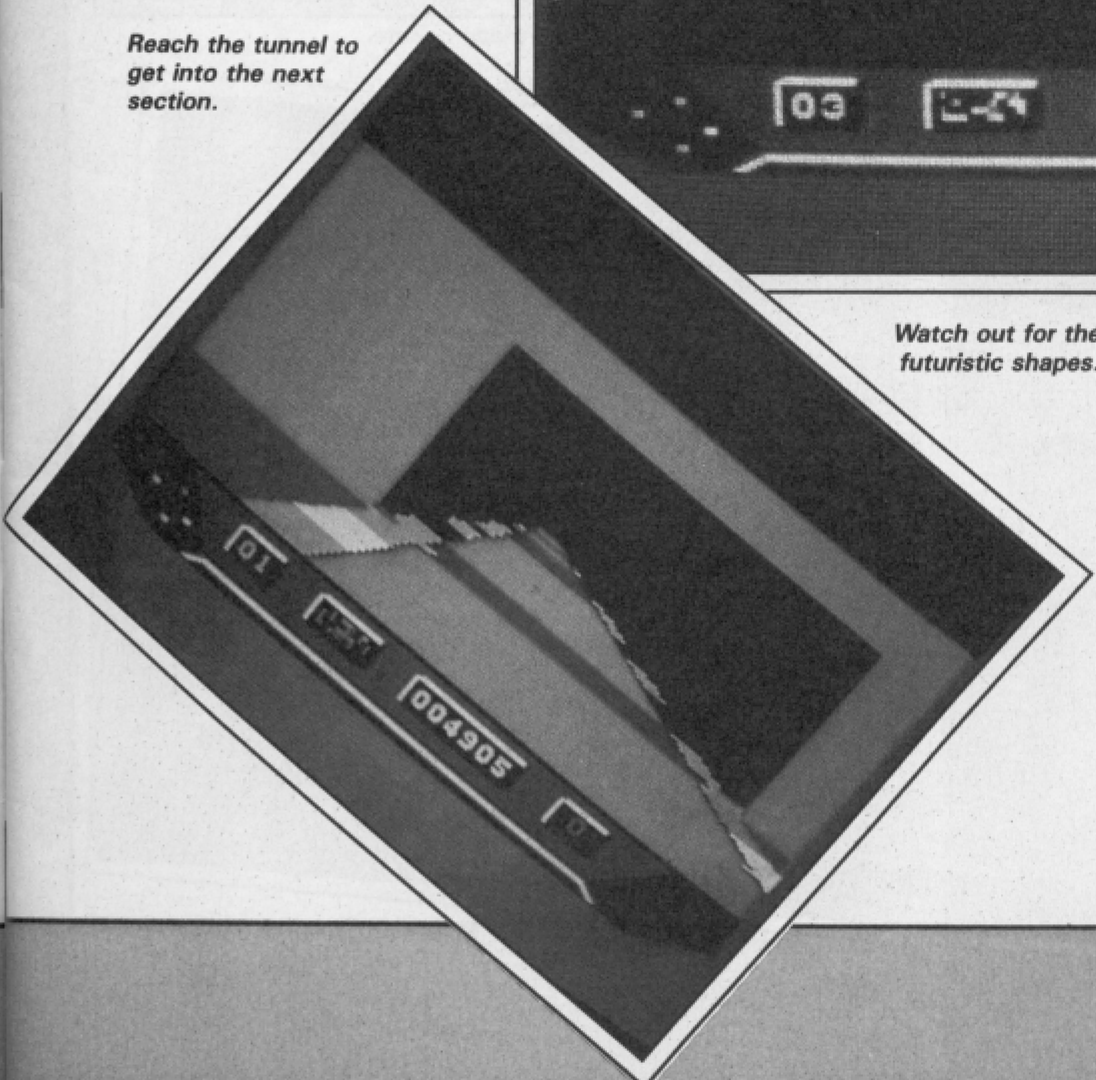
It is all very futuristic — with some highly impressive shapes moving towards you. As well as the bouncing balls and cuboids you are also buzzed by a jet fighter that swoops low over your car and then accelerates towards the horizon.

It's difficult to sum up Elecktra Glide because there is so much in it that is good — it's just that the whole thing doesn't get together to make a playable game.





Watch out for the futuristic shapes.



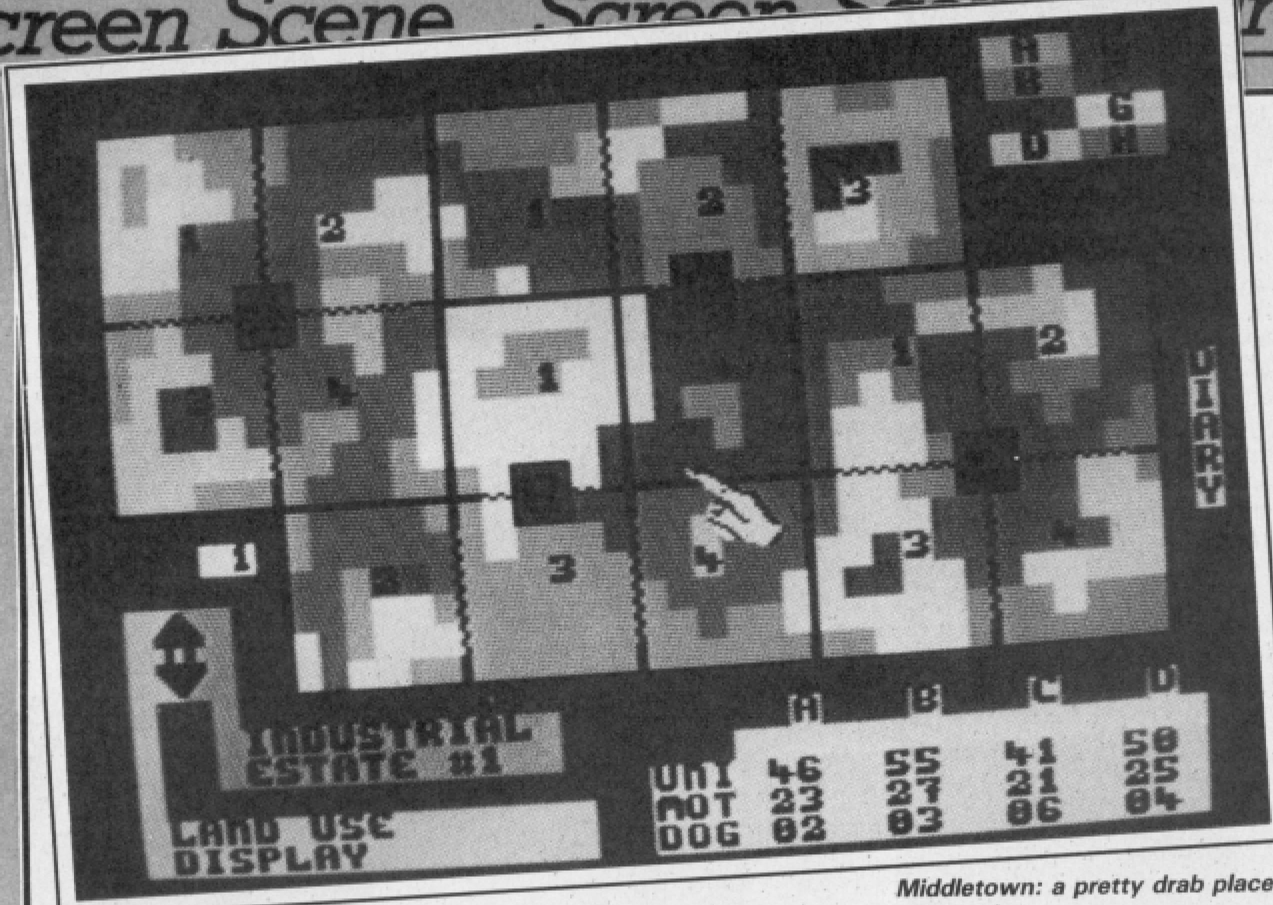
Reach the tunnel to get into the next section.

I can't help thinking it was a mistake on English's part to invite comparisons with Pitstop II because that just serves to remind you what a superior racing game the Epyx product is.

All new racing games have to be compared to Pitstop II because that is the standard. Elektra Glide falls below this standard for about the same money.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★★
Toughness	★★★
Staying Power	★★★
Value	★★



Middletown: a pretty drab place all round.

THE FORCE
Commodore 64/128
Mind Games
Price: £9.99/cass

'Ello 'ello 'ello, what's this? A game in which you take on the role of a police officer. Sounds interesting. Perhaps you can do all the things that seem to make the police so, er, popular? Well not quite. The Force is a strategy game, and a boring one at that.

The main graphic display is of a drab-looking map showing different coloured regions each of which represents a different type of area such as 'residential' or 'industrial'. Four different police stations are marked and each has control over four separate zones.

It's possible to access from this screen voluminous sets of statistics showing crime rates in each area and the number of different types of police unit (bobbies, motor patrols, dog handlers, etc.) currently allocated to each.

Based on this information you have to plan how to deploy your units for the week ahead, a time period which is broken down into no less than 21 different shifts each of which may require separate planning.

In addition, you have to make allowances for special events such as football matches and visits of dignitaries listed in the week's diary (a separate screen).

Once you've made your decisions, you advance the clock and a teletext-type printout tells you of all the bank and post office raids you failed to allow for properly and how your police rating is suffering as a result.

Finally you have a chance to control the town's traffic — the only part of the game that takes place in real time. The idea is to switch traffic lights on and off to keep vehicles moving round the perimeter road.

The program is being promoted on the strength of being 'icon-driven' — in other words you make your choices by using a joystick-controlled cursor to select from a range of small pictures each representing a different option. In theory this is easier than entering text or being presented with a range of menus.

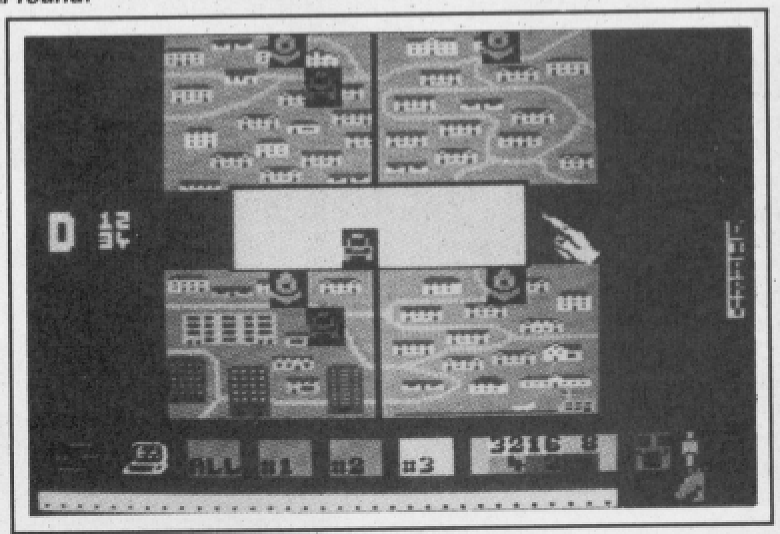
Not so with this program, where you have to spend hours poring through a manual to work out what exactly you're supposed to be doing at each stage. Icons only work if they're virtually self-explanatory. Their use here is clumsy and gimmicky.

This is not to say there are no worthy features in this title. On the contrary, a great deal of work has gone into it as is evidenced by the detail in the *three* separate manuals, cleverly written as if addressed to a real police officer.

But as an entertainment it's let down by certain strange departures from realism (such as the daily bank raids), by its utterly nondescript graphics and sound, and by the fact that when all's said and done it requires far too much effort for far too little reward. As they say — a policeman's lot is not a happy one.

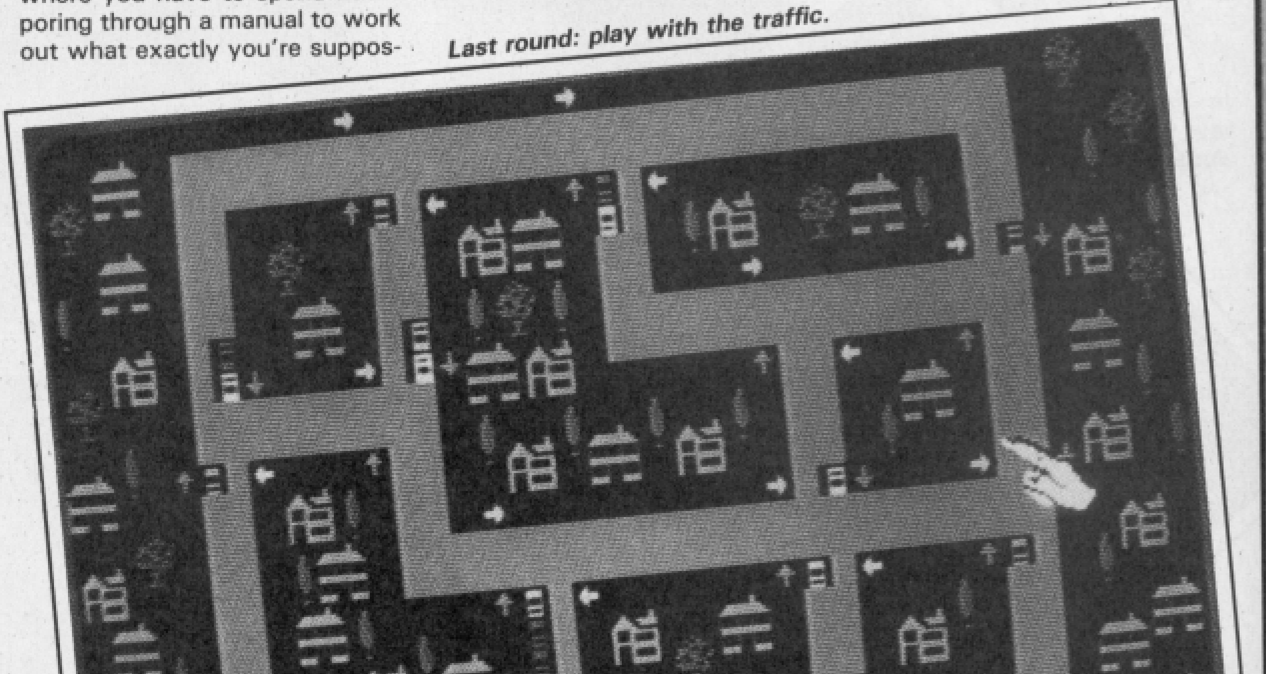
Chris Anderson

Graphics	★
Sound	★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★★



Area D: deploy forces where appropriate.

Last round: play with the traffic.



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TIME TUNNEL
Commodore 64/128
US Gold
Price: £14.95/disk
£9.95/cass

You are 114 years old and young as gnomes go. You would love to become gnome king, but this is not easy, for you must rescue seven pages from an ancient gnome scripture which were scattered across time by an evil cyclops. Your task is to regain them and decipher the messages before you can become gnome king.

You start the game in gnome mansion but before you can set off you must build a time machine, it's not exactly Airfix but there are instructions. With the whole shebang assembled it's seat belts on and back to the . . .

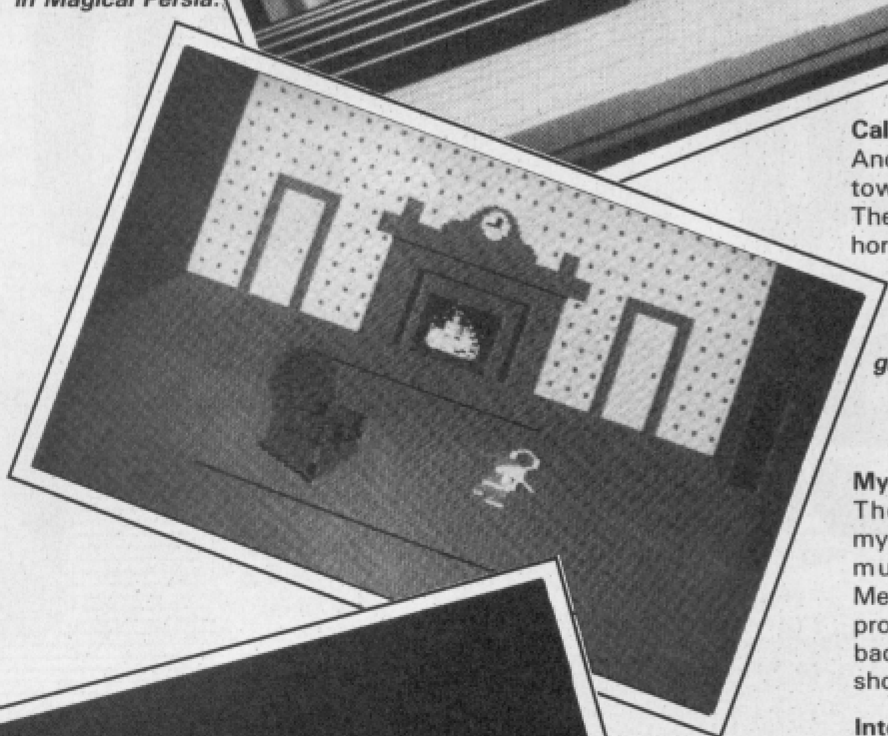
Stone Age (9600 BC)
Each time zone has its own clue in the instructions, ''Lever yourself to be a little bolder''. I am sure this has something to do with the stick you will find in one of the caves, but I'll leave you to work that one out yourself. A piece of the scripture is found in every time zone but can you find this one?

Magical Persia (893 BC)
You stare at the setting sun while pondering what to do next, when you suddenly hear enchanting music. You look up and see the most beautiful lady. What do you do next? Follow her, pick up the shield and store it, or go towards the time hole which will send you to another destination.

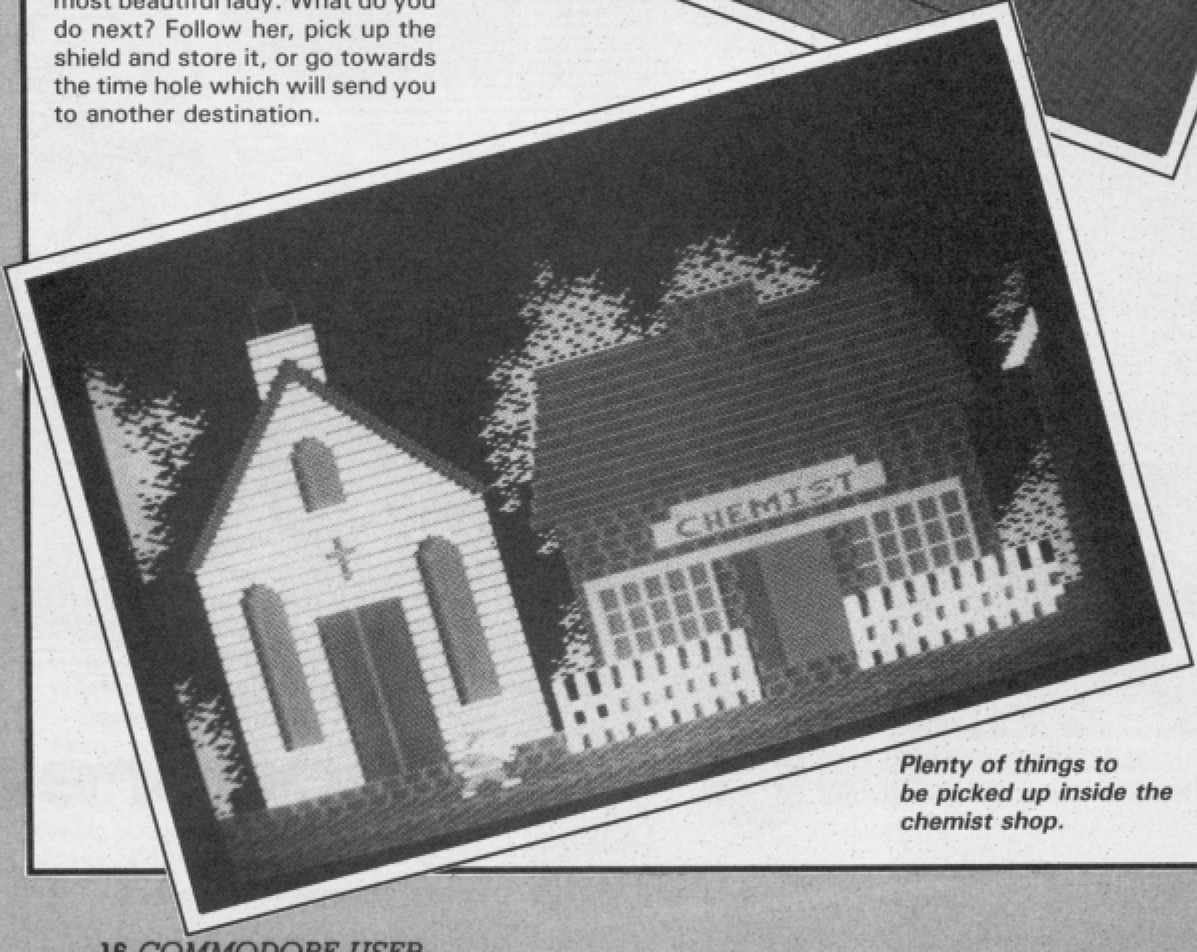
Colonial Salem (1692)
You enter this tiny American town which has only bats for occupants. Touch these bats and find yourself back at gnome mansion. But don't let this worry you because you can shoot them with a little gnome lightning. There is also a chemist and a bakers which you can and should go into.



Find the beautiful lady in Magical Persia.



You start the game in gnome mansion.



Plenty of things to be picked up inside the chemist shop.

California Gold Rush (1849)
Another slightly larger American town with three caves to find. The key to this one is moving the horse.

Mythological Greece (86 BC)
There are five screens in mythological Greece, but you must be careful because Medusa's about and without any protection she can send you back to gnome mansion with one shot.

Intergalactic Spaceship (3456)
You are transported to a scene that looks something out of Star-Trek. Pick up the plus sign to the left of the control board, you should find some use for it when you explore the spaceship.

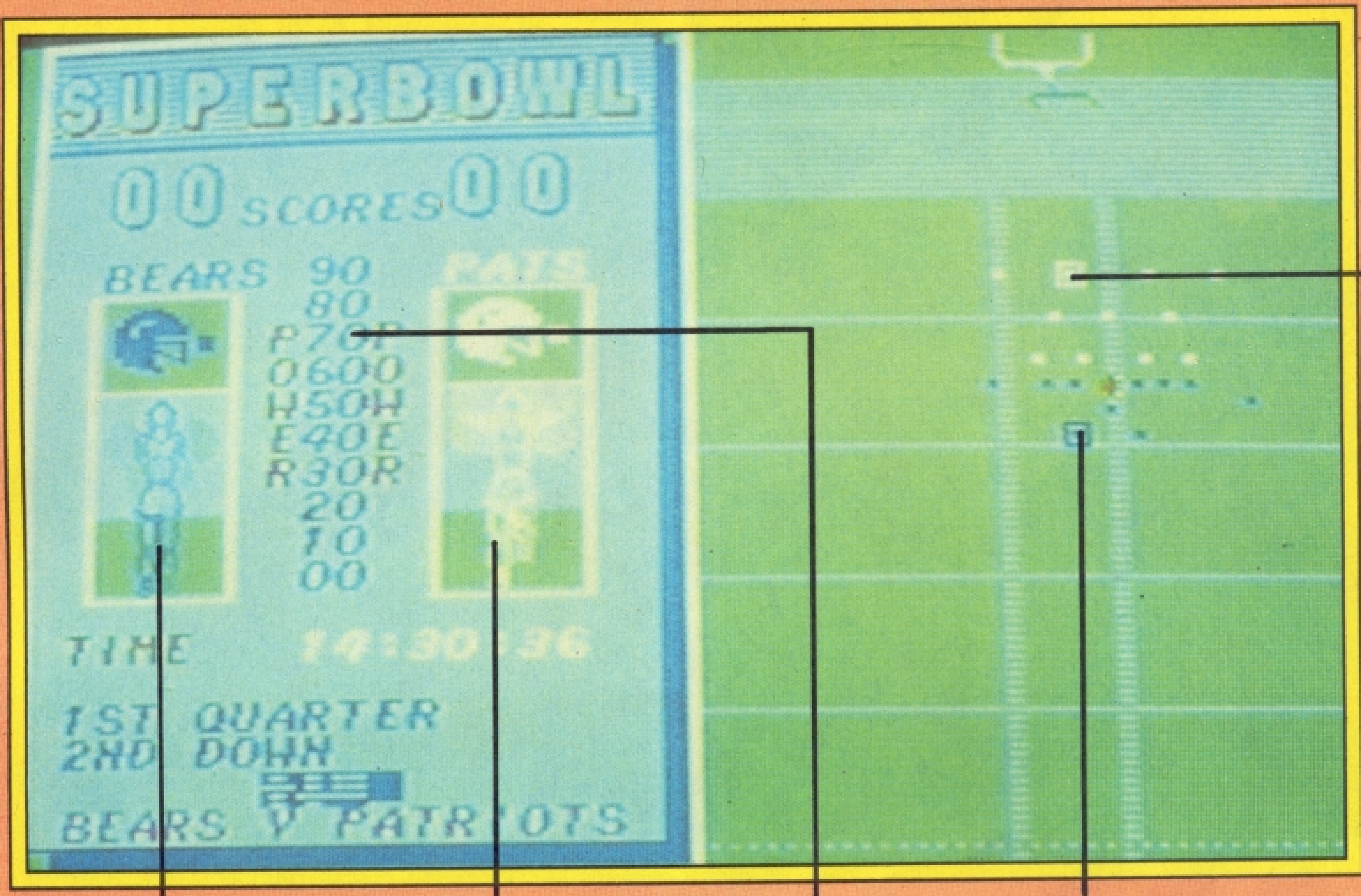
The Black Hole (9999)
This is the final destination for any gnome who has all the pieces.

Overall U.S. Gold have produced such a highly entertaining puzzle package that you may want to become gnome king strange though that may seem.

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★


URIDIUM
TURN ON TO URIDIUM
THE ARCADE SPACE COMBAT GAME
Feel your adrenalin pulse as you throw your Manta fighter through its heart-stopping sequence of dives, loops and spins. Thunderous rocketry and shattering cannon shells batter your senses. Hard-edged metallic graphics assault your visuals. Screaming enemy fighters fracture your nerves.
Cool crisis control rips you through the mobile and surface defences of the alien Super- Dreadnoughts to the confrontation with Uridium itself.
Uridium by Andrew Braybrook is the stunning sequel to the chart-topping Paradroid, Zzap! 64 gold medal winner and Newsfield's Arcade Game of the Year.
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Small screen representation of the action as it happens to both sides. This side of the screen takes over as a menu during tactical selection.

Power scale for punts and extra point trick.

Your receiver. Right and slightly above him is the offence quarter-back. Once action begins you control him.

The player under control in defence – try and use him to intercept and tackle.

SUPER BOWL
Commodore 64/128
Ocean
Price: £9.95/cass

Interest in American Football has grown steadily in this country since Channel 4 began televising it. Only the thrills of Brookside stopped it being the company's biggest audience puller. So when I sat down to watch the Super Bowl final in January with a few cans of Yorkshire and party pack of salt 'n vinegar crisps I was not alone.

At its peak the Super Bowl had 6.3 million people propping their eyelids open. Like me many of them got bored watching a massacre and went to bed. Ocean's game though gives you the opportunity to replay the whole thing with the blessing of the NFL. So if you're good enough the Pats might stand a chance after all.

Don't worry if you don't understand the rules properly there's an audio tape that comes with the package explaining all about it. And don't go thinking for a moment that if you go and buy it you'll end up with something like the Ten Yard Fight coin op that was in all the pubs a year or more ago. It's just not possible to have that many players on screen with the 64.

So the approach Ocean have taken is to go for a split effect on the screen and to concentrate your attention on the strategy that is so important in the real thing. Don't turn the page though it's not like *The Force* or *Iwo Jima*, once you get used to the selections then it can be played quite quickly.

As I've said the screen is split vertically in half. The left-hand side of the screen is devoted to the tactical decisions for the preliminary part of the game before you actually make a play.

Let's say we are playing a two player game and that I'm offence and you're defence. Right, you have the duff Commodore joystick and I'll use the Wico. Now once I have possession I have three attempts to make ground. Using the joystick I'm goint to select from the menus which pop up on the left.

The first decision I have to make is what kind of pass to attempt. The options range from long, short, rush and a special play (such as field goal). Selection of one of these takes me to a more detailed menu from which I choose the type of pass I have already selected. If that sounds confusing you must remember there is more than one kind of long or short pass.

If I selected the 'shotgun' pass — in which my quarterback runs in reverse to his own endzone and then throws a long 'bomb' pass — this is automatically indicated on the right hand side of the screen where the teams are displayed as small squares. Finally I choose who I want to be my receiver by shifting a cursor around the team. All this is done by joystick and takes very little time.

At this point you get a chance to arrange your defence to try and stop me scoring (no chance). The first thing you have to do is choose a formation. Different formations are needed depending on where you are. You then go to a more detailed menu as I did before to select exactly which player is marking which. It doesn't matter if you don't know what each number does because the players flash as you move down the numbers. Get plenty of men on my quarterback (number 10) because he's the business.

The last thing you have to do

After the play has been made you get a replay screen depicting the action.



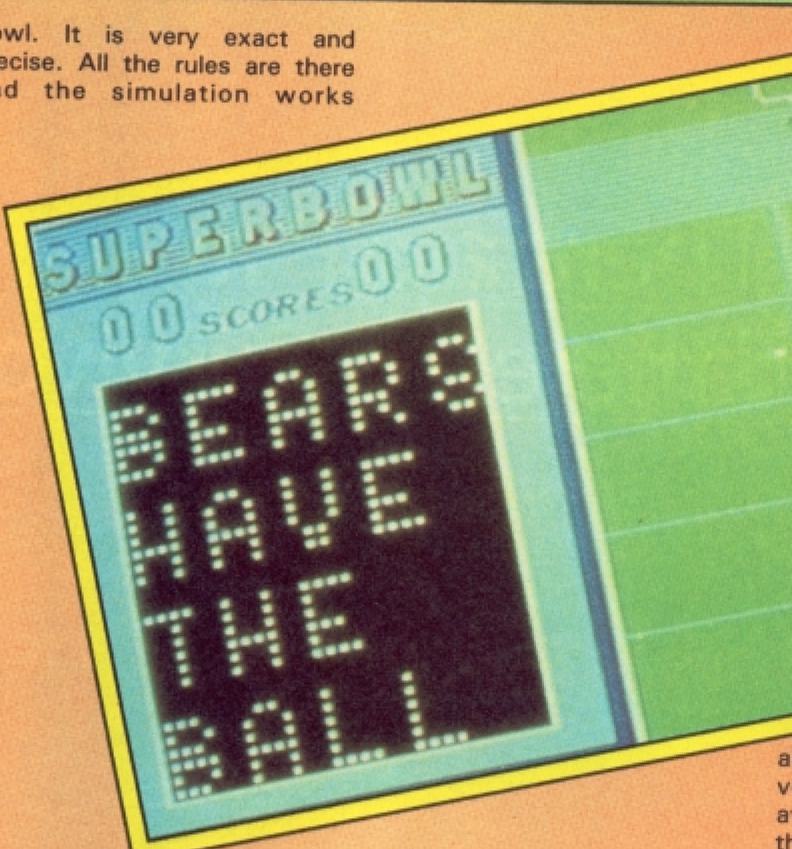
before I maul you is select a man to control. This is just as I did with my receiver. Place your cursor on a player — preferably one of the backs — and get ready for the off. When I hit the fire button we go into the kind of explosive play you get in the real thing. Don't blink otherwise you'll miss it.

The action now switches to the right hand side of the screen. The ball will be snapped back to me and I will have instant control of the quarterback. You will at the same time be charging at me in an attempt to 'sack' me. Each of the men you put to mark on mine will go for them. What you do with the player you control is up to you, but I suggest you try and get him to make an intecept.

Right are you ready? Go! And it's all over, my 'split end' has just scored. You were too slow. Takes a bit of getting used to doesn't it? Just in case you missed it there's now a replay going on in much larger size on the left-hand side of the screen.

Now all I have to do is kick for the extra point. I select the right power on the screen and there we go another point and it's turning into a massacre for the Bears again. Go away and practice with the computer for a couple of weeks.

I'm a bit torn about Super Bowl. It is very exact and precise. All the rules are there and the simulation works



The result of the play — the Pats have lost possession.

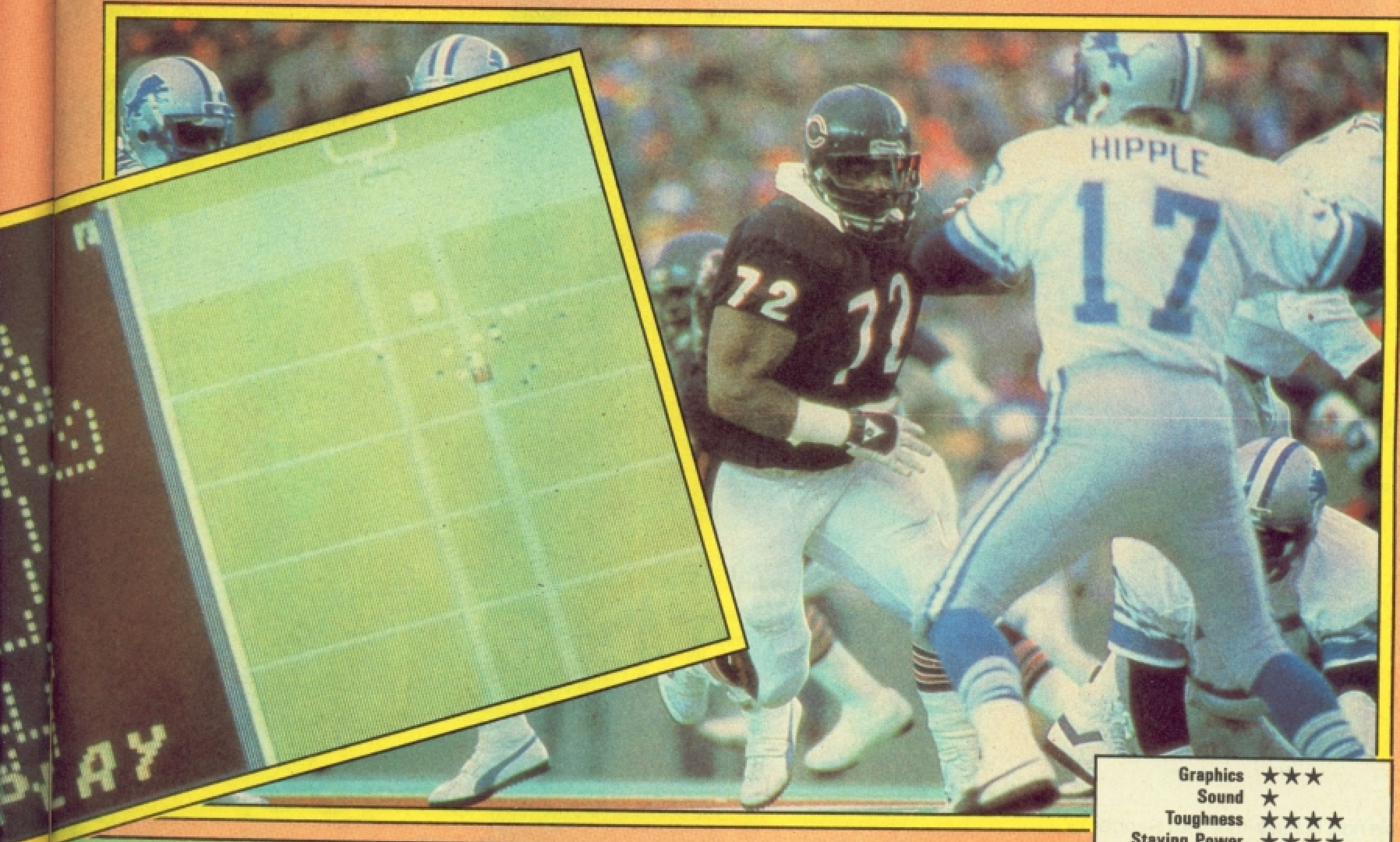
perfectly. It's a shame that the players are limited to the size they are by the 64's sprite capacity. If there is a way around it Softstone, the game's programmers, couldn't think of it.

The speed of the thing isn't as slow as it may sound because the selections don't take long once you're used to the game. The computer will also select by default for you — suggesting an option at each stage. All you have to do is keep hitting the fire button.

As simulations go I don't see anyone doing any better with American Football. The strategy and possible moves the game allows, not to mention the convoluted rules, sap a lot of available memory. To have made the game prettier with good animation and larger figures would inevitably have detracted from the gameplay and that is what counts.

Nevertheless a game you have to apologise for suggests that it isn't going to be a classic. It all depends on how much of a fan you are. Me, I think it's my turn to punt.

Mike Pattenden



Graphics	★★★
Sound	★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★

3 Bears Competition

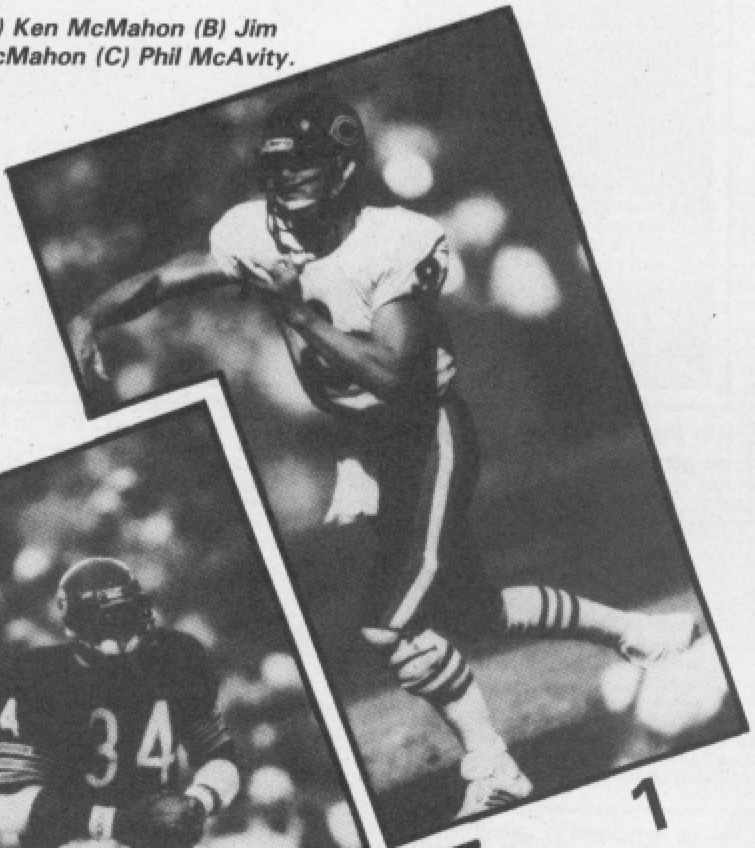
win SUPER BOWL and Bears strip

You've read the review and watched the highlights now you'll probably want a chance to play for yourself. We're offering you the chance to win 30 copies of Ocean's **Super Bowl** and a special prize selection of American Football kit.

If you don't want the Bear's strip don't worry you can have any NFL team you like. Added to that there's a NFL ball, stickers of your favourite team and a bath towel to dry off with after the game!

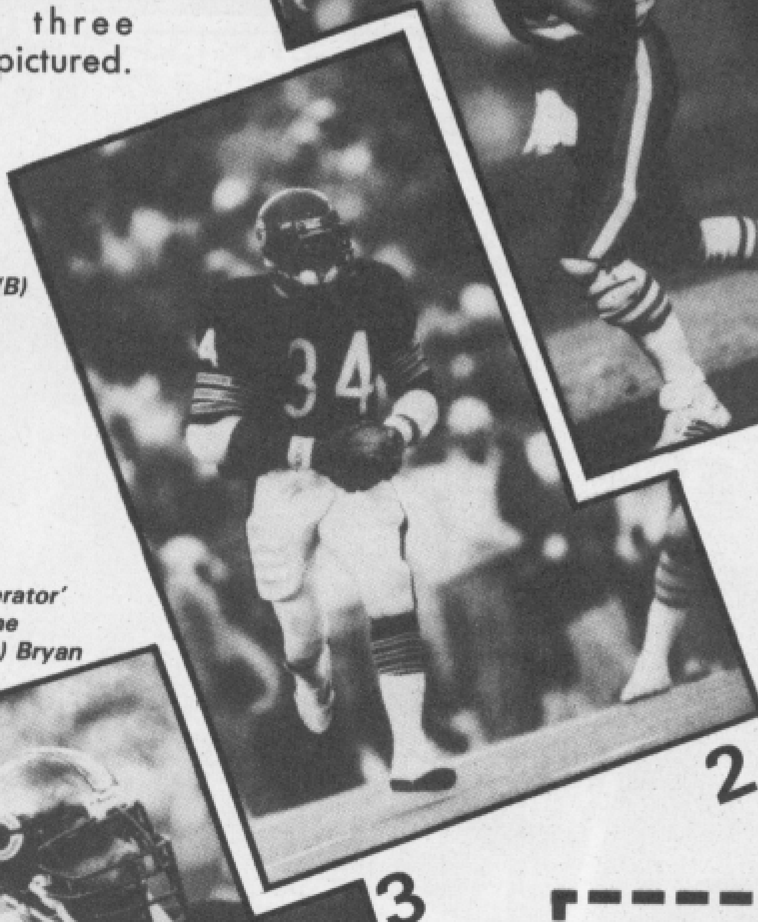
We're making the competition hard (ish) so as to favour the American Football fans. What we want you to do is identify the three Chicago Bears pictured.

(A) Ken McMahon (B) Jim McMahon (C) Phil McAvity.



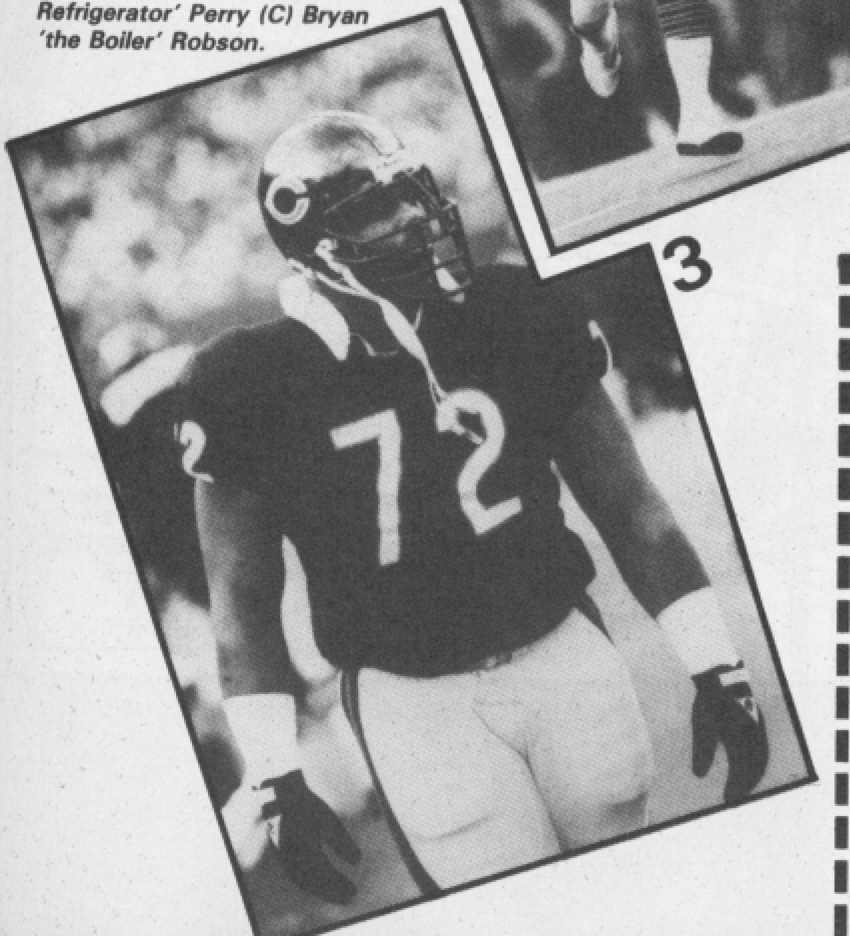
1

(A) Walter Payton (B) Danny Wallace (C) Dean Friedman.



2

(A) John 'The Refrigerator' Woods (B) William 'the Refrigerator' Perry (C) Bryan 'the Boiler' Robson.



3

Choose the correct players from the three possibilities given for each picture and then tell us in no more than 50 words which First Division footballer in this country would be best suited to go and play American-style Football and why.

Fill out the coupon and send it to: Three Bears Comp, Commodore User, Priory Court, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Entries to reach us no later than April 15.

Name ....

Address ....

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Picture 1..

Picture 2..

Picture 3..

I think .... would suit American Football

because ....

.... (no more than fifty words — use separate sheet of paper).

ARC OF YESOD
Commodore 64/128
Thor
Price: £9.95/disk

Charlie a troubleshooter unwillingly helping the ICUPS (International Commision for Universal Problem Solving) is back in this, the sequel to the impressive *Nodes of Yesod*.

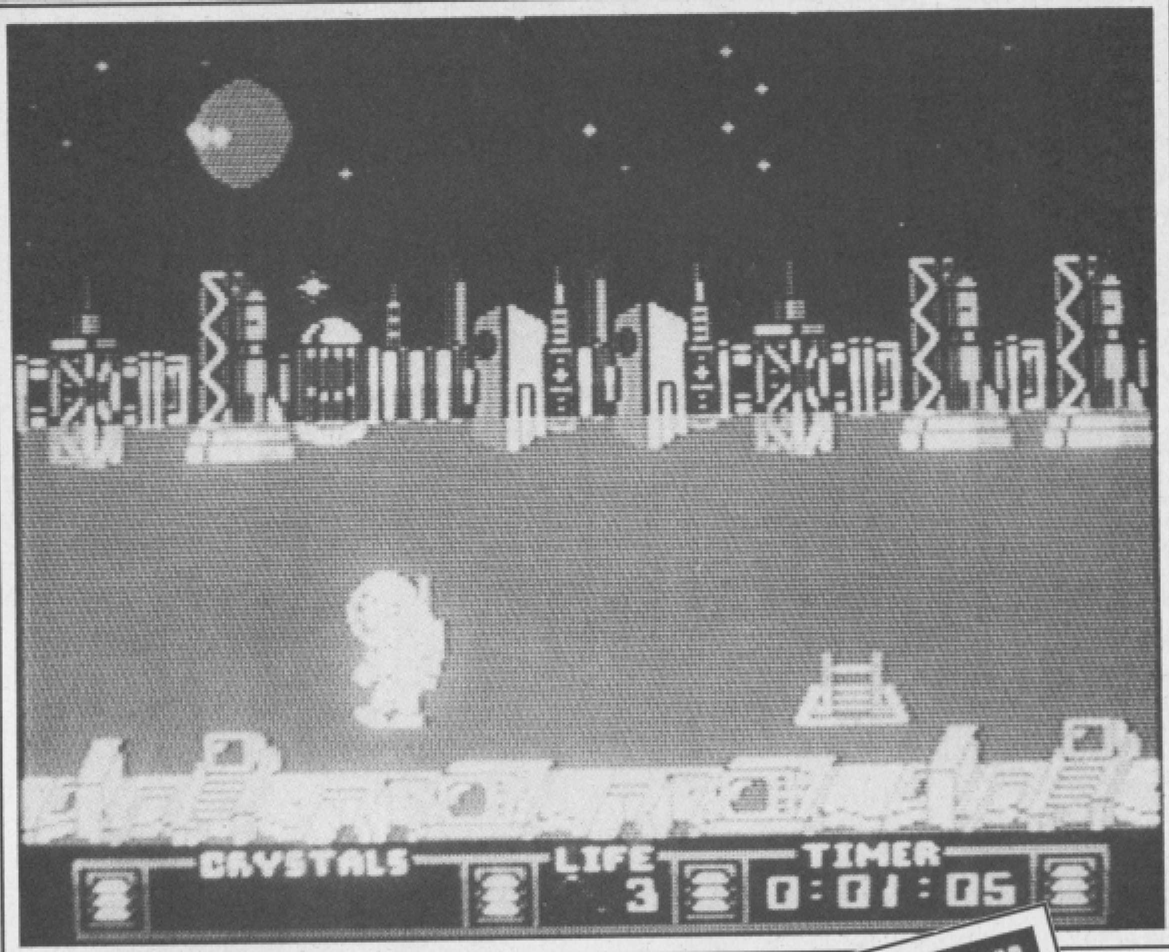
The game follows on almost where Nodes left off. Charlie was investigating the transmission of vital data concerning the world's defences from the moon from a structure called the Monolith.

He returns in this game to destroy the Monolith which is in fact a very sophisticated computer designed for the purpose of aggression. Failure to destroy it will allow the machine's controllers the Ariatans to wipe Earth of the astrological map.

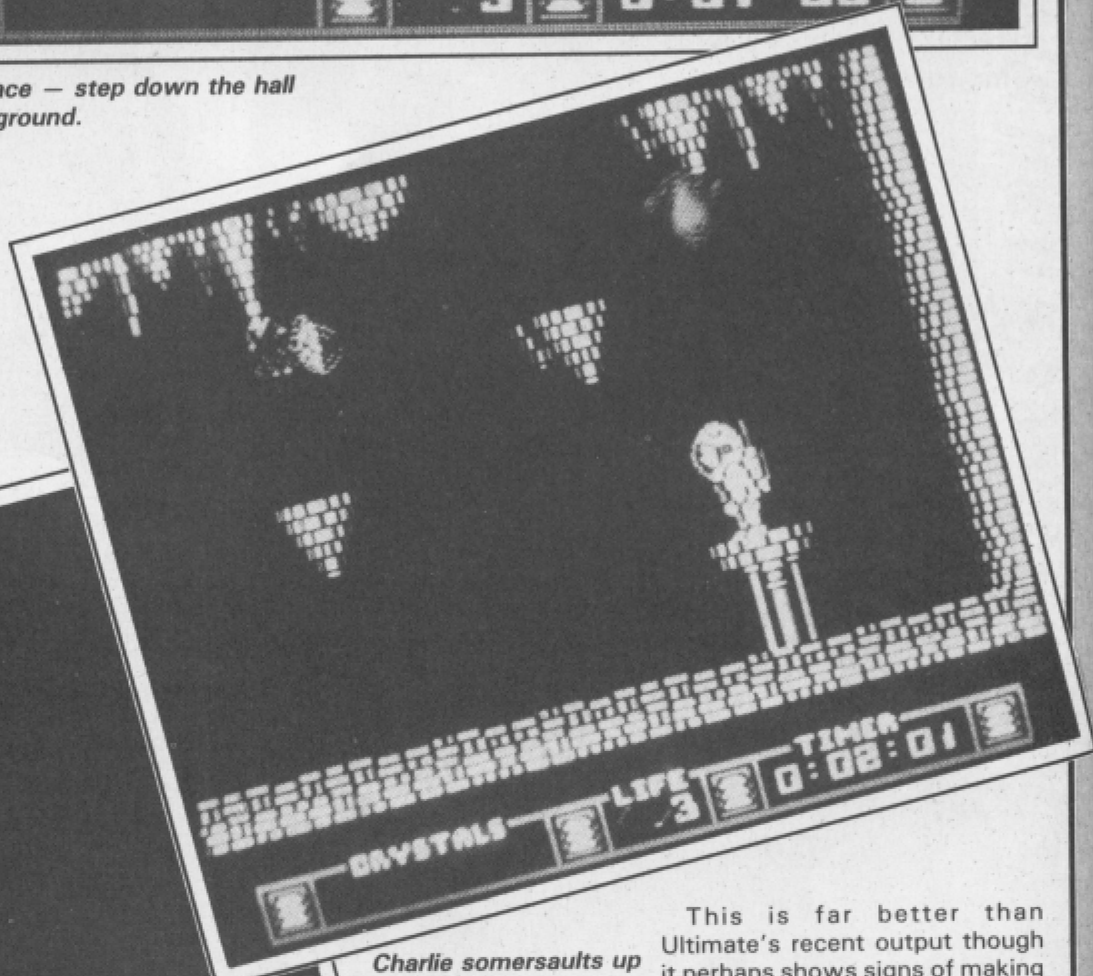
The resultant action is much the same as Nodes. Arcade adventuring with hundreds of locations and pretty graphics. As before areas to explore exist above and below ground and you as Charlie wander through them in your space suit protected only by your destruction sphere.

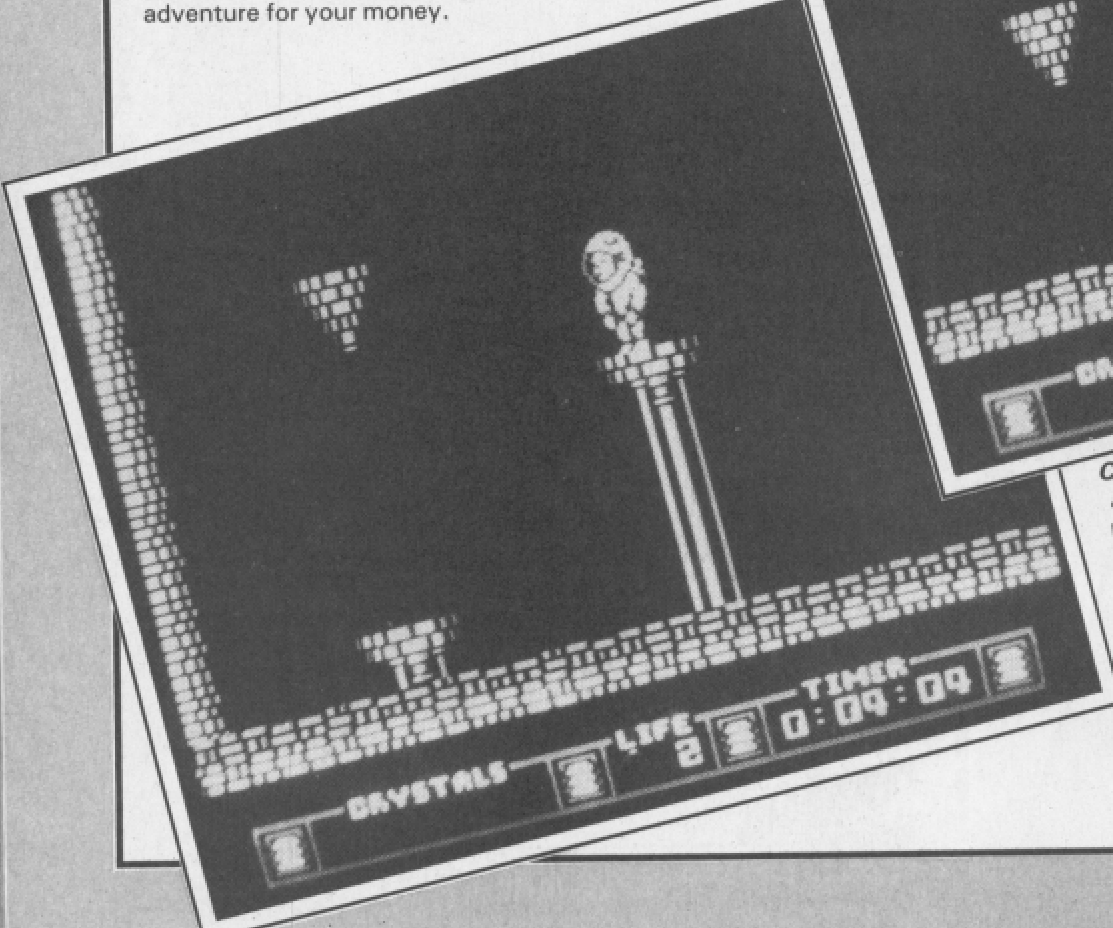
Collect the crystals as before using the transporters to move quickly around the locations. These hold the key to the destruction of the Monolith.

If you've seen the original expect more of the same, but if you're a newcomer to the Yesod games you'll get a good arcade adventure for your money.



On the surface — step down the hall to go underground.





Charlie somersaults up and over the podiums with a stab of the fire button.

This is far better than Ultimate's recent output though it perhaps shows signs of making their mistake in finding a successful format and overdoing it.

A new game next time please to keep us all happy.

Ferdy Hamilton

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★
Value	★★★

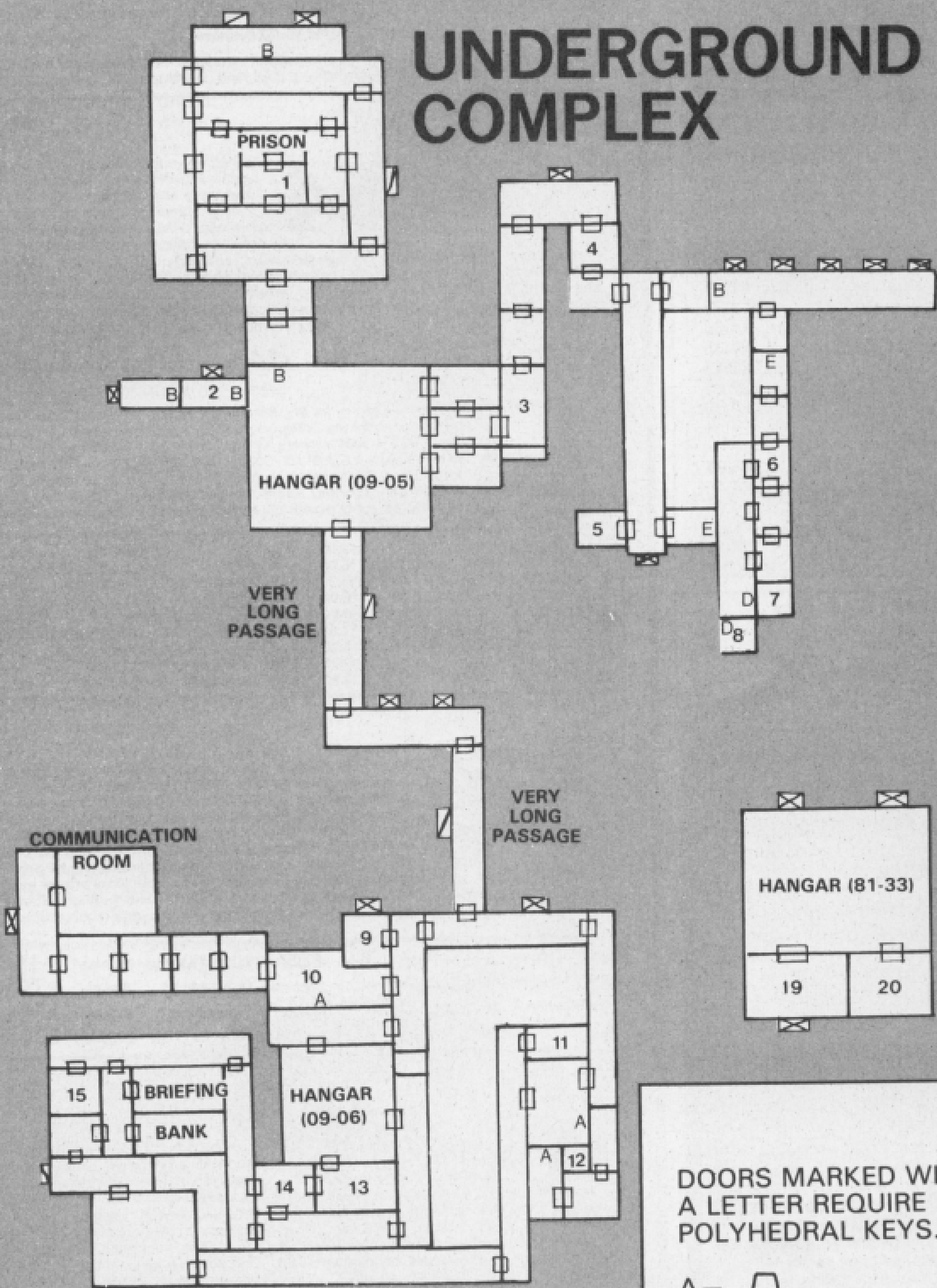
Mercen

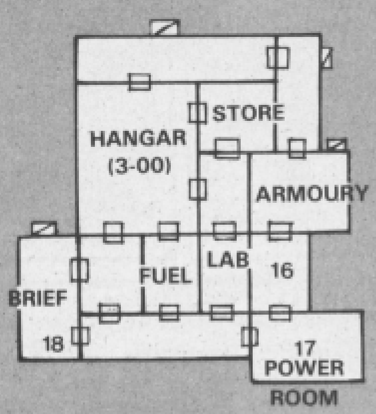
UNDERGROUND COMPLEX

Here it is, our map of the most important locations in Mercenary. At the beginning, you must go underground and reach the Briefing Room for instructions. We've mapped out that area together with the two hangars (09-05 and 09-06) you can go down to get there. Remember, in this area, there's also lots of objects you'll need to pick up.

Our second map is of the Palyer Colony Ship you'll eventually get to. You must take gold to the Exchequer and medical supplies to the hospital room. Have fun, 'cos that's all we're telling.

by Adrian Bott





MECHANOID COMPLEX

DOORS MARKED WITH A LETTER REQUIRE POLYHEDRAL KEYS.

A—
B—
C—
D—
E—
F—
G—

TELEPORT
FAULTY TELEPORT OR ONE-WAY TELEPORT TO 03-00 (MECHANOID COMPLEX)

TRANSPORT

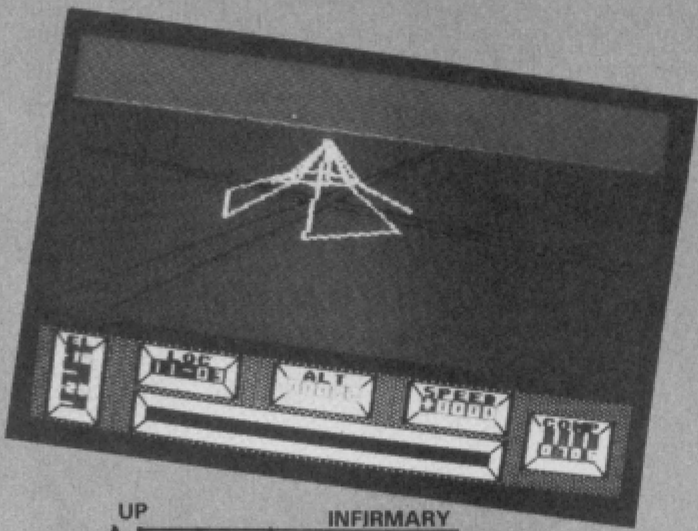
HANGAR 03-00 CONTAINS A PALYER SHIP

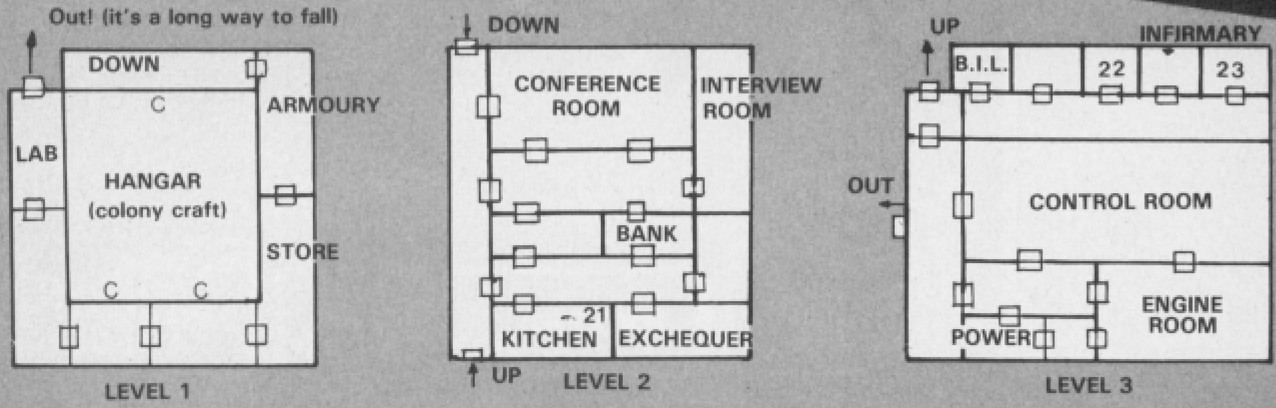
HANGAR 0905 CONTAINS A GROUND VEHICLE

HANGAR **—** CONTAINS A JET FIGHTER

HANGAR 03-15 CONTAINS AN INTERSTELLAR SHIP, WITHOUT NOVA DRIVE

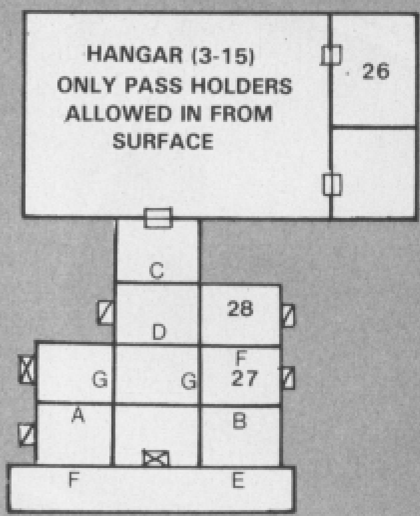
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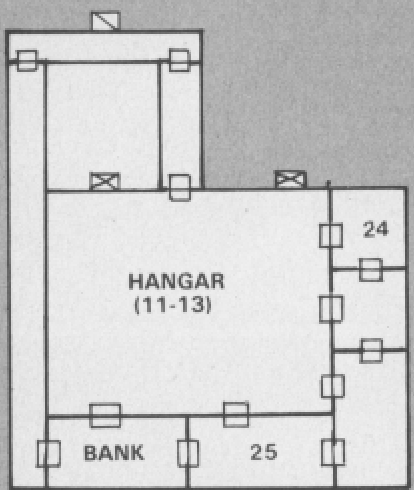


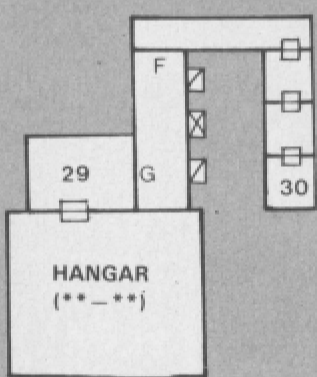


PALYAR COLONY CRAFT
(08-08, 65000m above ground)

PALYER COLONY SHIP





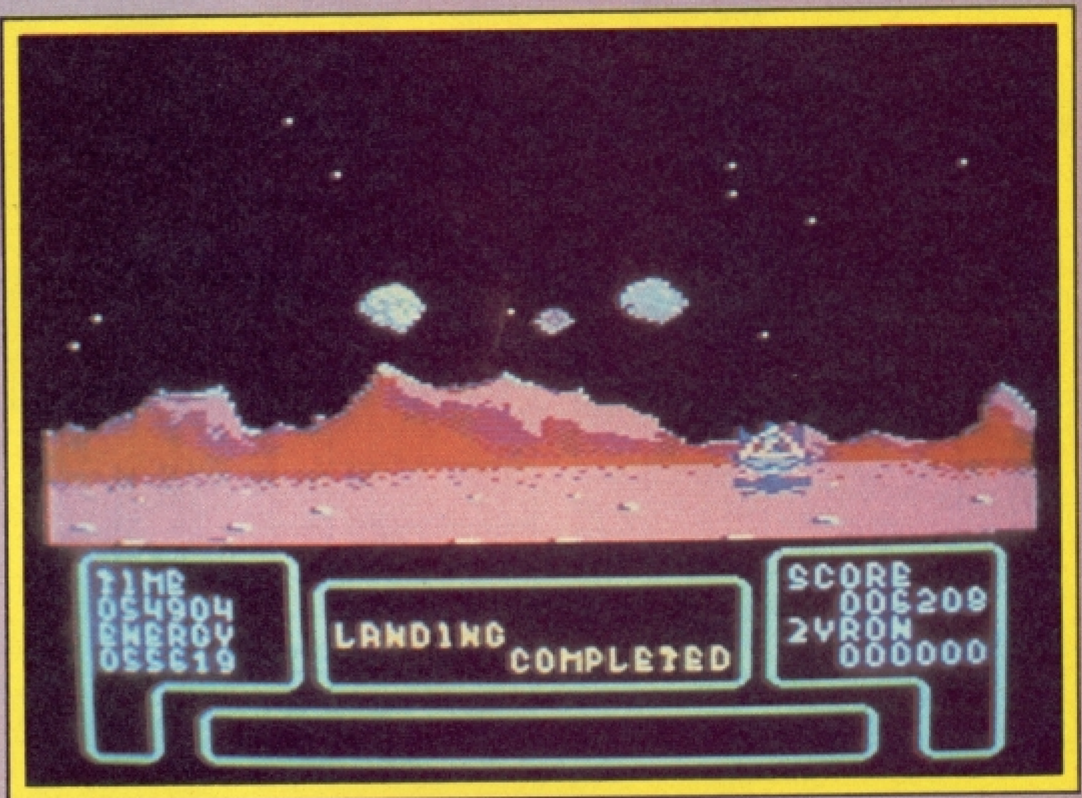


OBJECT KEY

1. ANTENNA
2. PHOTON EMITTER (USE IN DARK ROOMS)
3. NEUTRON FUEL (NEE ANTIGRAV To carry this
4. KEY △
5. COFFIN
6. ANTIGRAN
7. METAL DETECTOR
8. KEY ⬭
9. MEDICAL SUPPLIES
10. POWERAMP (INCREASES SPEED TO MAX)
11. KEY ⏢
12. LARGE BOX
13. SIGHTS
14. ENERGY CRYSTAL
15. CATERING PROVISIONS
16. KEY ⌂
17. ESSENTIAL 12939 SUPPLY (TRY LOOKING AT THIS FROM BEHIND)
18. MECHANOID
19. GOLD
20. KEY ⌂
21. KITCHEN SINK
22. ANTI TIME BOMB
23. KEY ⬠
24. CHEESE
25. USEFUL ARMAMENT
26. PASS
27. DATABASE
28. KEY ⏢
29. WINCHESTER
30. NOVADRIVE

Screen Star

STARSHIP ANDROMEDA
Commodore 64/128
Ariolasoft
Price: £12.95/disk
£9.95/cass



Use your shuttle to go down to the planet surface.

Not the first deep-space epic to reach our screens, but *Starship Andromeda* could prove to be a tough nut to crack even for battle-hardened Elite commanders. The game has rigid objectives, although unlike Elite, no clear strategy is visible at the outset.



Beneath. Steer your ship down into the planet to the bottom, pick up what's there and go back up.

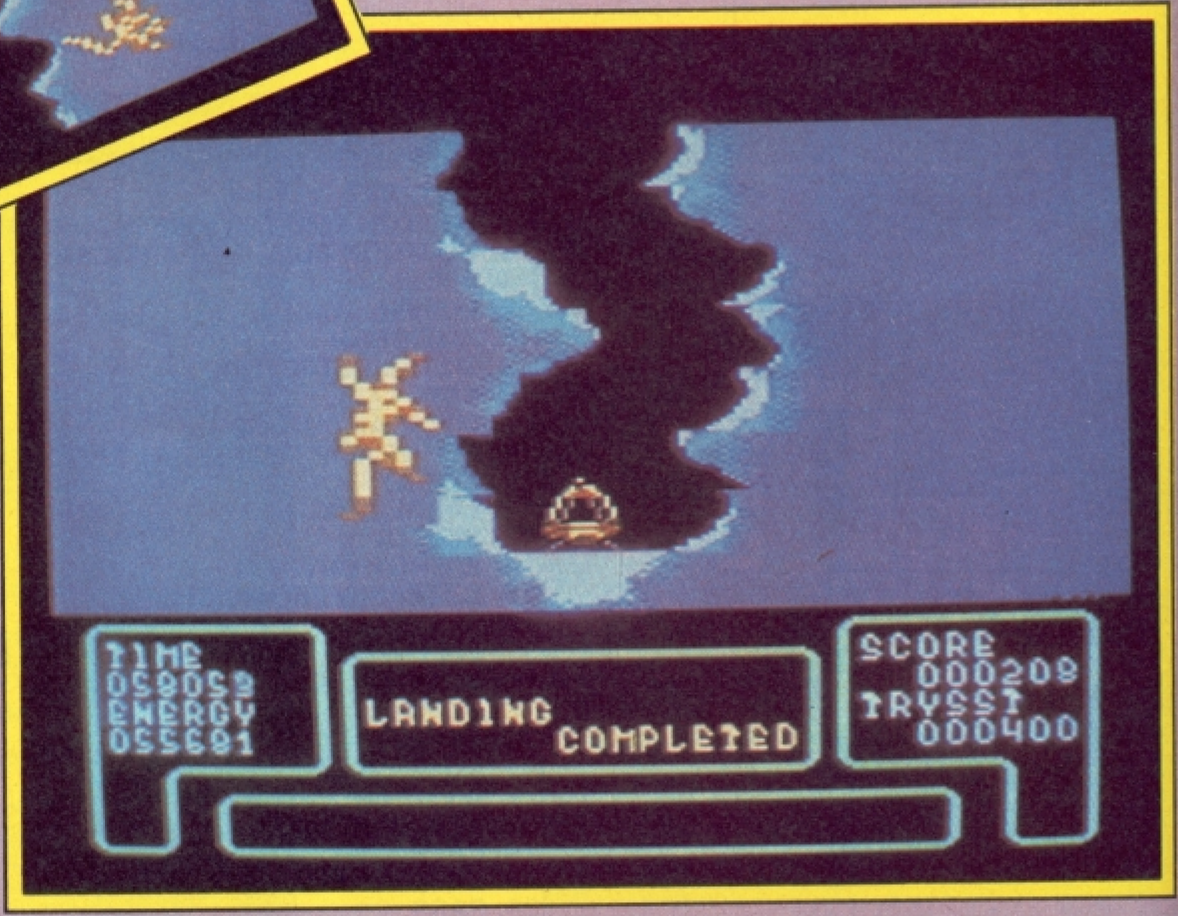
The Plot: The Galaxy is being run by the Federation under the evil eye of a tyrant named Alana. Her power eminates from a necklace which also happens to be the security key for the Mindlord computer, which controls the Galaxy.

Your task is to locate a proton lance and the materials (Zyron and Trysst) to power it, destroy a sufficient number of Federation starbases to corner Alana, cut the necklace from her and reprogram the Mindlord computer for the benefit of mankind.

The Game: Starship Andromeda is a game of many scenarios and much exploration. To complete it, you will have to play and complete each of the five 'Warps' in sequence. Each warp is loaded from the double-sided disk provided, and a password system allows entry to warps two and above. This password system also permits continuation of a game at a later date.

While in normal space, you will find an assortment of enemy craft, planets and asteroids. Applying full thrust will project your craft into metaspace, where vast distances can be covered in a relatively short time, and the effects of red giants and blue dwarfs (types of stars) take their effect on your time and energy reserves. Running out of either, or losing all your crew members will cost you the game!

Warp 1 contains the planets from which you collect Trysst



and Zyron (the two elements needed to power the proton lance), requiring you to descend treacherous chasms, and scour the surface while avoiding meteorites.

Warp 2 contains the 'where-with-all' to acquire a proton lance.

Warp 3 contains the starbases to attack and hold.

Warp 4 is Alana's starship which you will need to overcome and enter.

Warp 5 holds the conclusion to the game, the Mindlord computer, and the fate of the galaxy.

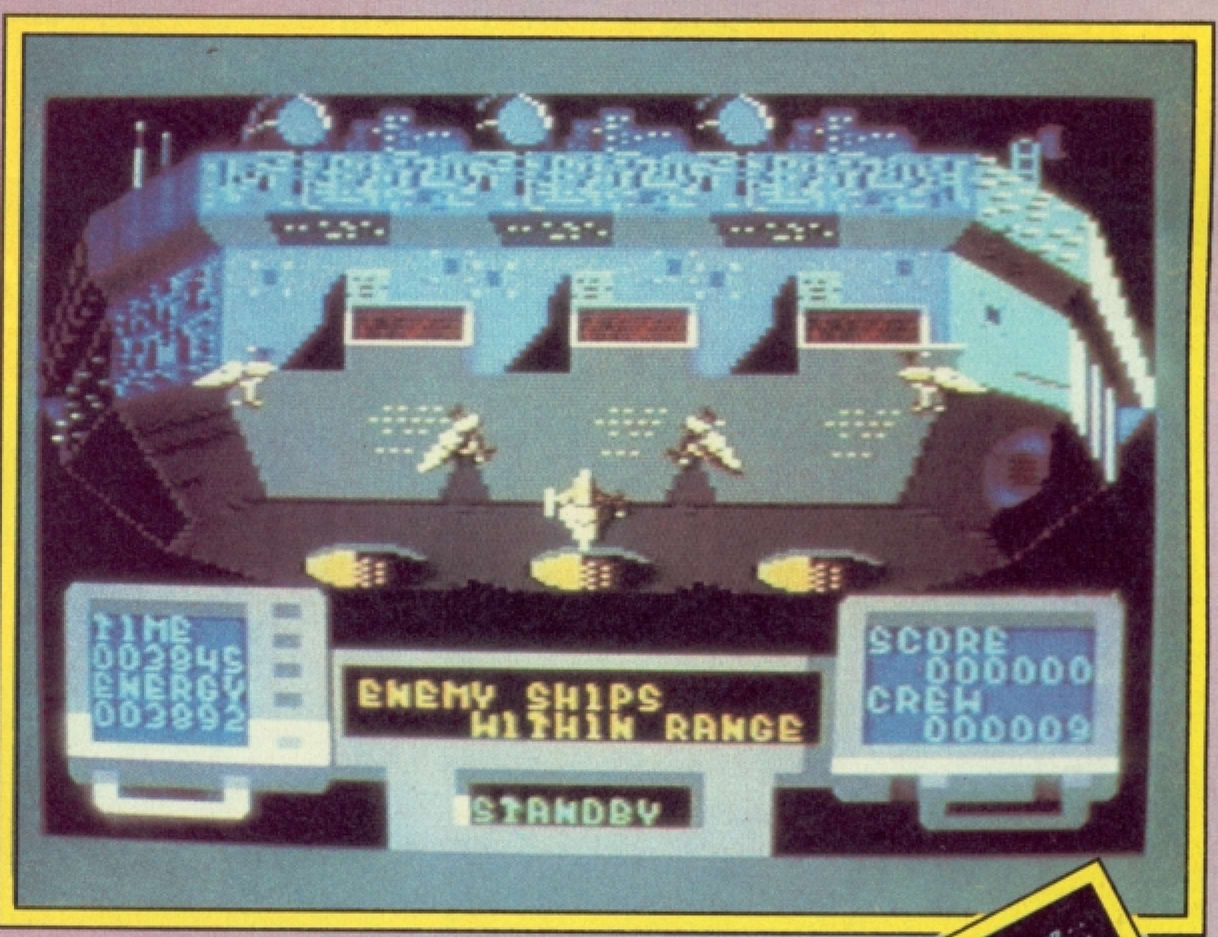
The graphics are simply wonderful: full colour solid objects here, not just stick-like transparent representations. Admittedly you don't get the full 3-D effect of being able to view an object from different angles, but the effect is pretty stunning all the same.

Soundwise, you get all the usual lasers, explosions and crashes, with musical interludes (the type that don't grate on your nerves), at appropriate moments.

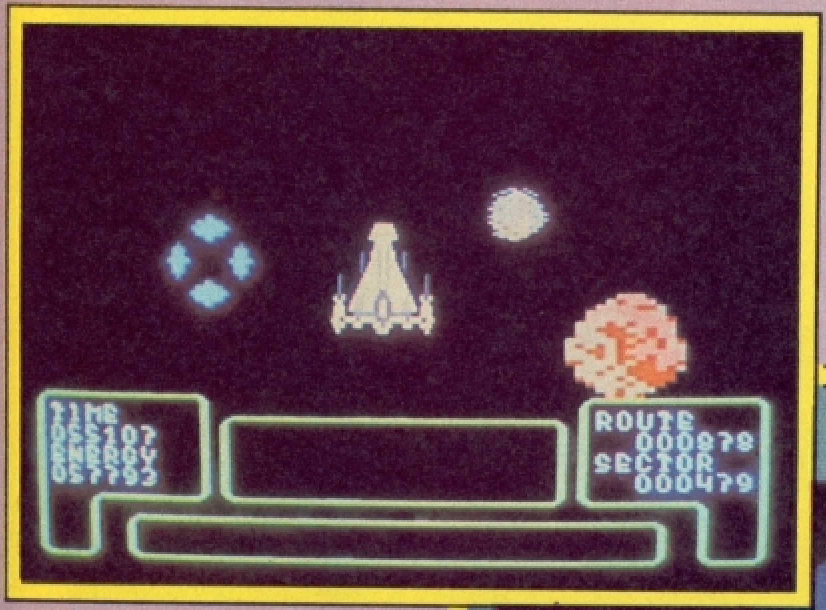
Although I've only scratched the surface of this epic adventure, I think you'll agree that cracking this nut is going to be quite a challenge, it certainly has enough action to wear out my best joystick!

Fred Reid

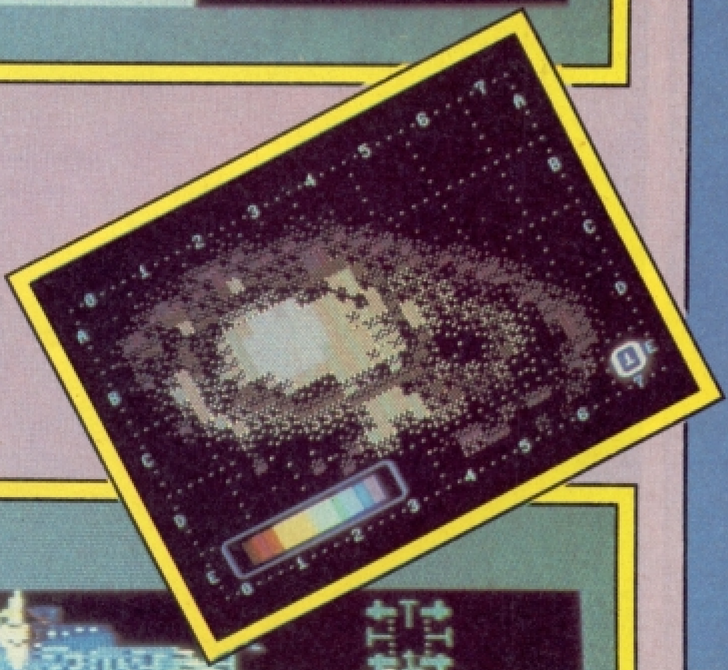
Graphics	★★★★★
Sound	★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★



End of the quest — this ship contains the Mindlord computer.



Switch to thrust mode to go into megaspace.

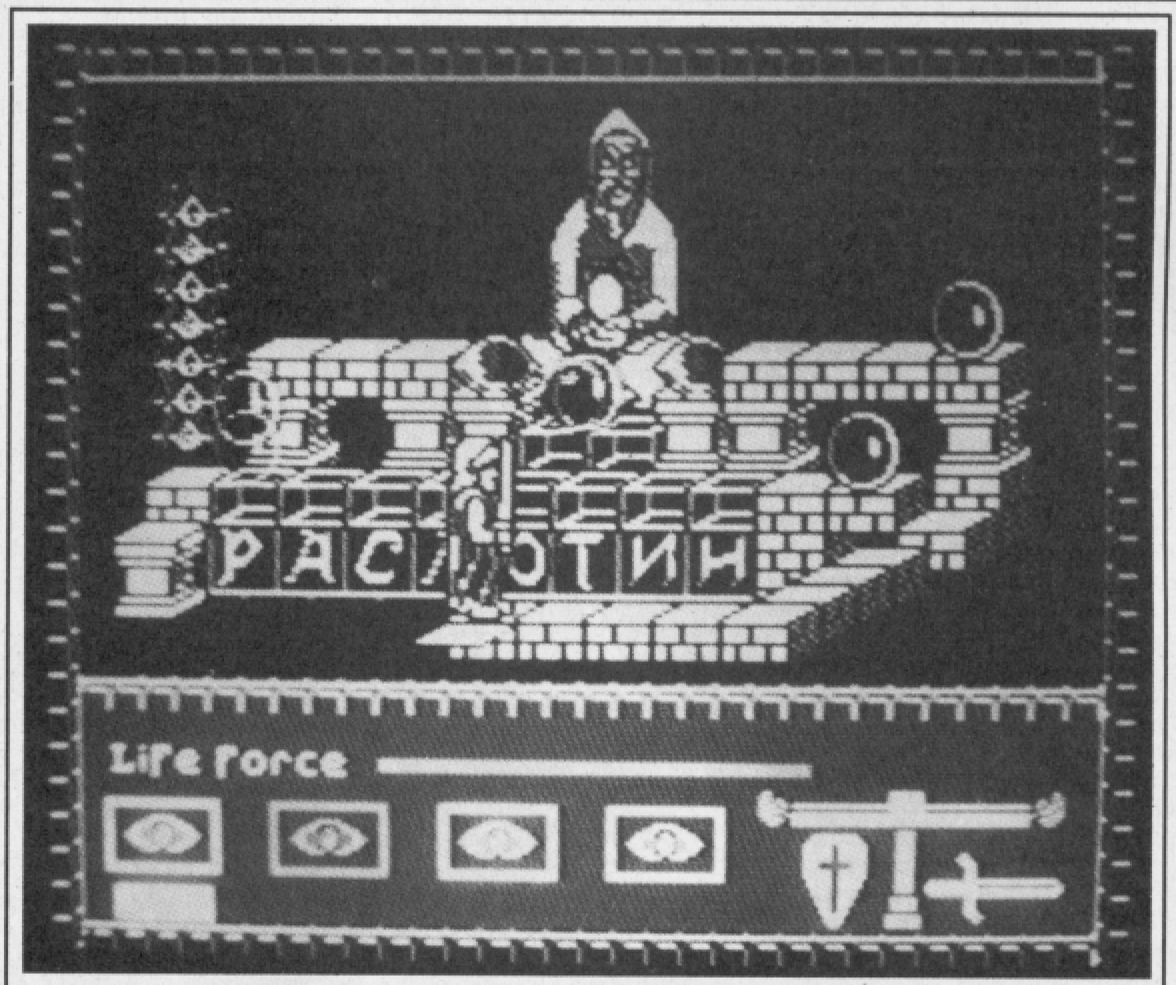




Use your laser to zap the enemy ships.


NEW
BEYOND
CHALLENGING SOFTWARE
NOW PLAYING ON COMMODORE 64/128
The closest thing you'll find to actually living in a fantasy novel.
OBSERVER MAGAZINE
There's so much one could say about this game, but it all boils down to one thing – go out, buy it, load it up, and spend hours, days, weeks, perhaps even months playing it.
PERSONAL COMPUTER GAMES
Doomdark's Revenge has not only matched the depth and appeal of Midnight, it has actually improved it.
PERSONAL COMPUTER WORLD
BEYOND
CHALLENGING SOFTWARE
Doomdark's Revenge
Mike Singleton
Doomdark's Revenge is more than adventure, mightier than a wargame. 6,144 locations, 48,000 screen views, 128 characters and 128 objects to collect. There are icelords, barbarians, dwarves, fey and giants to meet. Bitter weather conditions and welcoming torches to guide you through caverns. Its a game for one or more players whose skill alone will determine victory or defeat.
Doomdark's Revenge is available now from software dealers everywhere. In case of difficulty write to: Beyond, British Telecom, Wellington House, Upper St. Martin's Lane, LONDON WC2H 9DL.

RASPUTIN
Commodore 64/128
Firebird
Price: £6.95/cass



Rasputin, or PACNOTNH as they say in Russia, is very much in the mould of *Knight Lore*. No surprise then to discover that it is in fact a conversion from the 48K Spectrum. But don't let that put you off. It's an excellent game which has been improved by the addition of manic music courtesy of maestro Ron Hubbard.

You are cast as crusader Ivan Kosmovichski on an epic quest to discover the Jewel of the Seven Planets, source of the evil spirit of Rasputin.

Armed with your trusty sword and magic shield, you begin the quest on the opening screen. Actually, planets, in the sense of spherical bodies which orbit the heavens do not appear in the game. Instead, the scenario consists of a maze of 3-D rooms resembling the interior of a stone fortress.

On leaving the title screen in a southerly direction you pass through a gate which brings you to the first of eight antechambers. The other seven can be reached by travelling either East or West and there is a 'wrap around' which means if you go far enough in one direction you arrive back where you started.

Each of the antechambers is patrolled by mediaeval looking guards similarly armed with sword and shield. Usually they don't bother you, but if they become a pain a quick thrust with the old sword turns them into an instant burial mound complete with cross.

Above each gate is one of eight letters which form the word PACNOTNH (sorry our typesetters don't possess any Cyrillic script). This may have some deeper significance, but I found it a useful mapping aid.

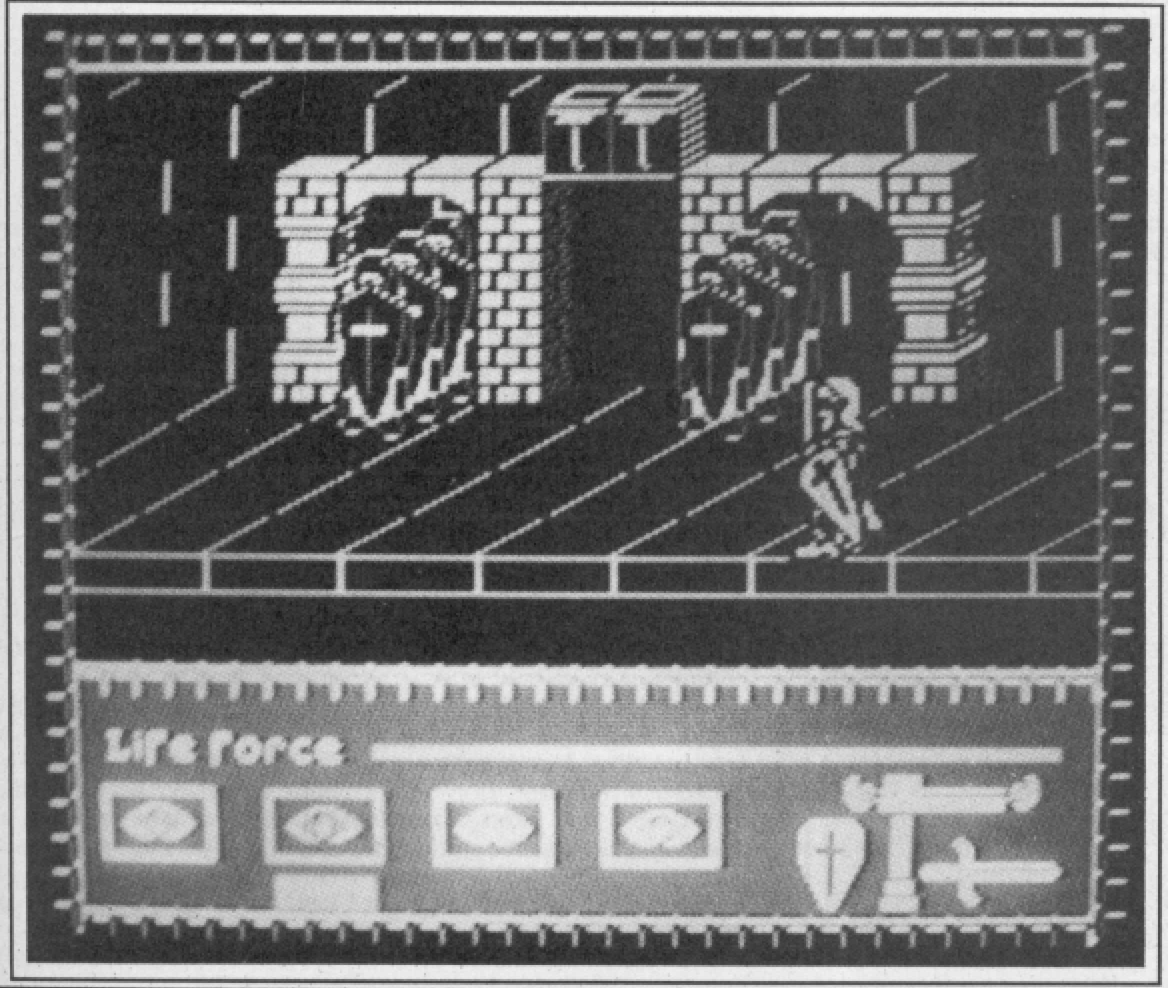
Passing through the gate you come to an inner chamber. Life here is very much more difficult due to the presence of evil beasties out for your blood, and contraptions which make progress nigh on impossible. It is in these chambers that you will find the stones bearing the mark of Rasputin. Simply jump on them to top up your energy reserves. The inner chambers also feature special stones which will transport you to other locations.

The game becomes a struggle to maintain your energy reserves. Each time you are run through by a guard, grizzled by a ghoulie, or simply stupid enough to fall off a wall, you lose energy. Whenever you jump on a Rasputin stone you gain it back.

In practice you can suffer many deaths before your energy runs out and you can make it last much longer by judicious use of sword and shield. Be careful not to overdo it though and keep an eye on the two-ended candle which burns away with each use of your weapon.

When the inevitable happens and you finally run out of energy, you are awarded a hero credibility rating. After a couple of hours play I managed just over five percent, plenty of scope for improvement there. I grew to like this game more as I played it.

Ken McMahon



Graphics	★★★
Sound	★★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★

F.A. CUP
Commodore 64/128
Virgin
Price: £7.95/cass

Every year at about this time, the nation is gripped by Cup fever. Great idea — bring a game out and capitalise on it all.

Virgin's effort is not a football arcade game like the now legendary International Soccer, but a Football Manager-style strategy game. Now I'm a great fan of Addictive's classic league struggle, so it would seem no problem to condense eight or so rounds to allow you even more managerial control.

So from a potential winner how do Virgin come up with a game which is as about as interesting as watching Accrington Stanley play Warrington in a bog?

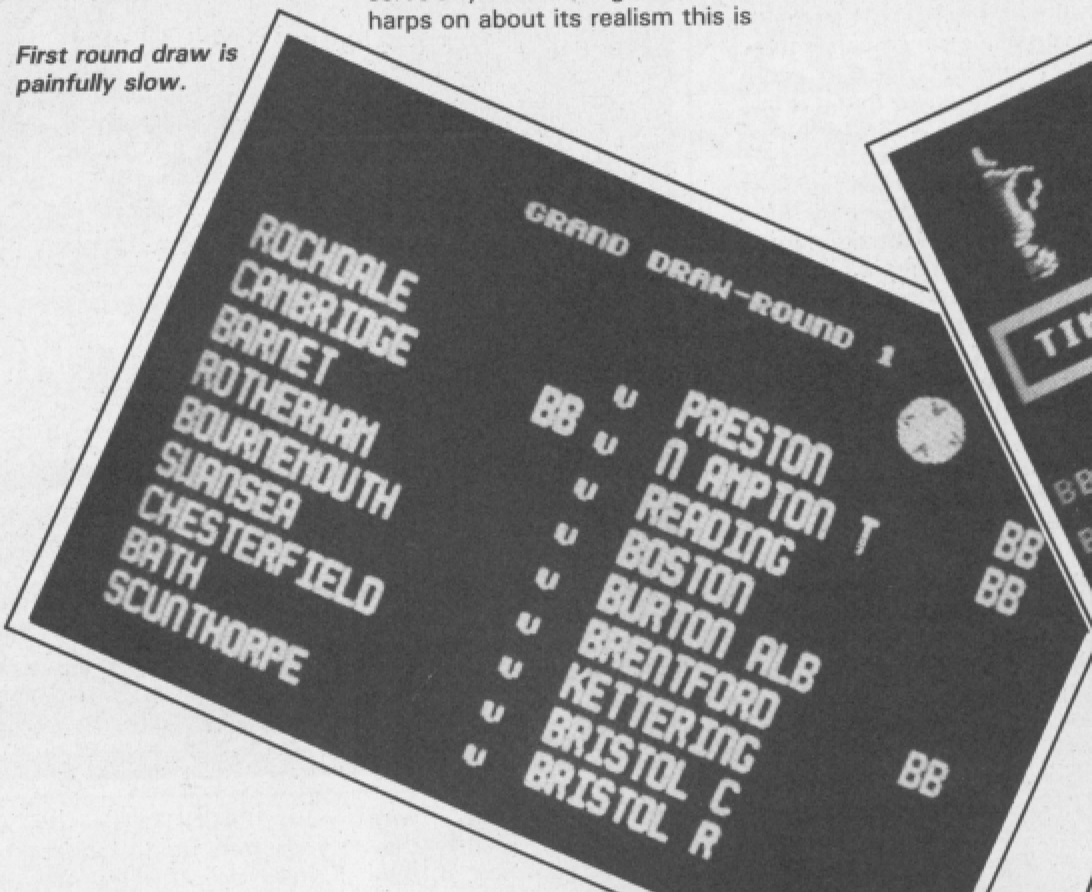
The faults are many. To start with you have a 1-8 player input. If there aren't eight of you, you end up controlling eight sides. In one final I was actually managing both teams.

As the painfully slow draw takes place you discover your only actual tactical control over the game is whether to choose to defend, play a balanced game, or attack.

In later games the matches are brightened up with a bit of news which is often so banal that you want to reach for the happy pills. I mean does a piece of information like "The goal nets are stolen on the eve of the match" serve any use? For a game which harps on about its realism this is pathetic. During one final I was told that both teams were looking tired after three minutes of play!

Doing the same repetitive

First round draw is painfully slow.





GERRY THE GERM
Commodore 64/128
Firebird/Hot Range
Price: £6.95/cass

I may as well come right out with it, *Gerry the Germ* is the sickest thing since space shuttle jokes. Six screens of pure revulsion. If you are in any way delicate, squeamish, or have a tendency towards hypochondria turn the page right away.

You are Gerry with a mission in life to infect as many organs as possible until the hapless humanoid drops dead with a heart attack.

Of course, you will need to infect your way through various screens until you reach the climactic heart scene.

Actually it is not as bad as it sounds. The organs are highly stylised — so that the lungs are represented by cylinder pumping machines, the kidneys a public toilet, the Pancreas a railway station (arf, arf), a tropical ocean complete with desert island for the bladder, and a bridge for the ear (don't ask me why, and don't ask Firebird 'cause they don't know either).

The one thing that all of the screens have in common is that they all feature some form of dodging and collecting.

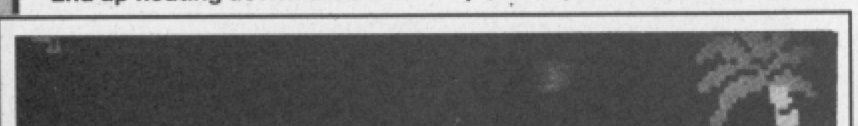
In the lungs you have to dodge the red blood cells protecting the cans of oxygen which appear from time to time. It's not easy grabbing the oxygen — you need to study the patterns of movement of the cells so that you can choose your moment to dash in and grab the cans. The cans also behave like the fruit in PacMan — disappearing a split second before you make your grab.

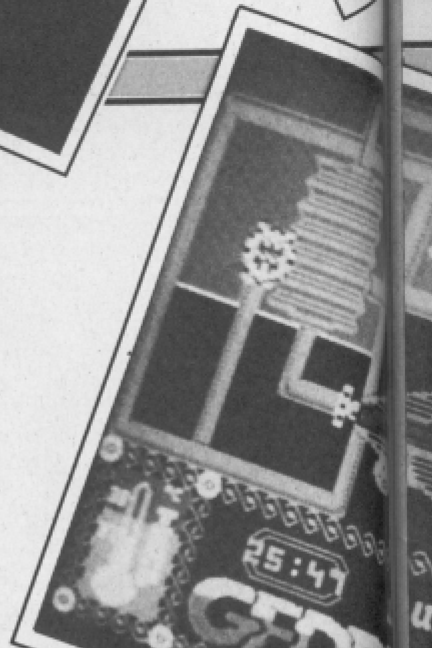
The kidney is more of the same — where you are challenged to eat six kidney beans before you get to use the toilet. Don't say I didn't warn you. And so on to the stomach — a levels and ladders game with fruits and thick wedges of yummy cream cake scattered around the platforms.

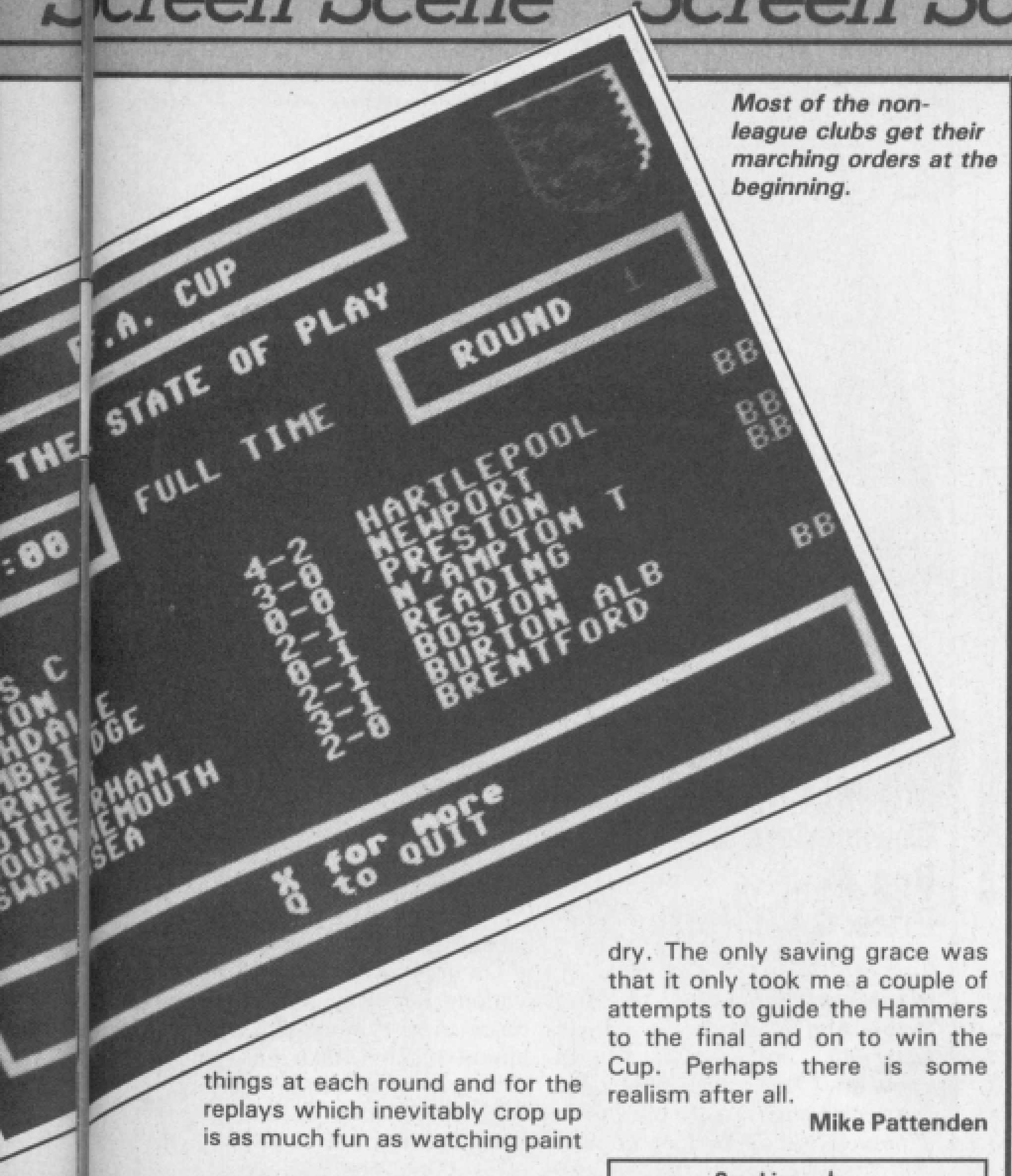
The bladder is where you end up if you bump into a red blood cell in the lungs, or get caught by one of the nasties on another screen.

It has to be the most tedious challenge ever conceived. Gerry is ship-wrecked. His tiny rowing boat is leaking so he needs to grab a piece of flotsam to plug the hole — in this case a loo roll. If he can hang onto the loo roll long enough it will take him up to the level of the island — his escape. Trouble is the sea horses

End up floating down the bladder if you bump into any nasties.







Most of the non-league clubs get their marching orders at the beginning.

things at each round and for the replays which inevitably crop up is as much fun as watching paint dry. The only saving grace was that it only took me a couple of attempts to guide the Hammers to the final and on to win the Cup. Perhaps there is some realism after all.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★
Sound	N/A
Toughness	★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★

MR PUNIVERSE
Commodore C16 and Plus/4
Mastertronic
Price: £1.99/cass

Mr Puniverse is Mastertronic's answer to Arnold Schwarzenegger. Mr Puniverse is the weediest, most pathetic example (and hence leader) of a new breed of men — wimps — whose destiny is to have sand kicked in their faces. Mr Puniverse is so weak and undernourished he must spend all his time in search of the vitamin pills which keep him alive, barely.

Design wise, Mr Puniverse is similar to Gremlin's *Monty on the Run*. By which I mean no more than that it's a platform game and a very good one at that. Mr P must work his way around the 25 screens and pick up his life-restoring pills from each one.

What makes it more of a challenge than your average platform pastime is that a certain amount of thought is required to retrieve the pills from the less accessable locations.

Laser beams make certain routes impassable, but can be switched off if you find the right lever. The problem is that switching off the beams allows the cannon to fire missiles at you. A few well calculated decisions have to be made as to which obstacle will be the easiest to overcome.

Sometimes it's simply a case of near impenetrable defences, like the room of half a dozen pulverisers. Pulverisers are like huge steel pillars which descend on you from a great height, it's a good idea not to be standing underneath them when they do.

In this room you have to run underneath the lot of them whilst at the same time jumping over the missiles fired from a cannon at the far end. This is difficult, but not impossible, I did it. Getting back out on the other hand is a different question.

There are a few things about the game I don't like. If you're not careful you can fall into dead ends which are impossible to jump out of. When this happened for the first time I concluded that the only thing to be done was turn the machine off and reload.

Then, using the 'press everything in desperation technique' I discovered that the D key causes you to commit punicide. Considering you have eight lives a minor price to pay really.

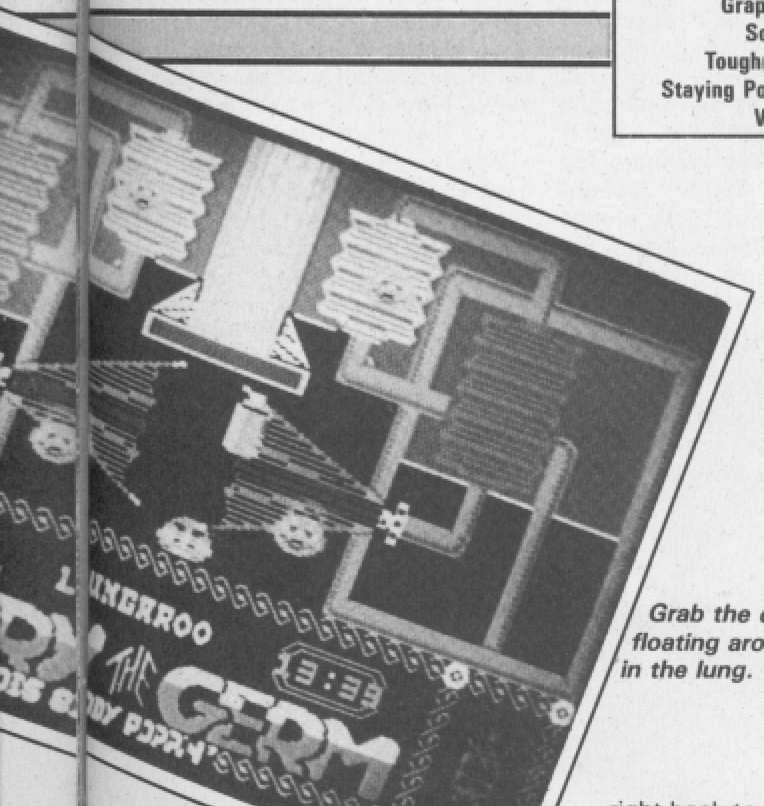
Much more annoying was when I headed blindly into a new screen straight under a pulveriser. That I could take, but watching my remaining seven Puniverses suffer the same grizzly fate without being able to do anything about it was just too much.

That aside, Mr Puniverse is an excellent game and well worth the usual two quid price-tag.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★★
Value	★★★★★





Grab the cans of oxygen floating around in the lung.

keep bobbing up and nicking the loo role to plug the tap. You'll see a lot of this screen at the beginning of the game. There's no avoiding it for Gerry the Germ is one of the games that takes you right back to the beginning again if you make a blunder.

In the unlikely event of you wanting to see this through to the bitter end you will have to infect the medical boxes in the pancreas and bounce arrows off a radio towards the heart in the final screen.

The best thing you can say about *Gerry the Germ* is that it is difficult. It would take a long time to crack. But the question is would you want to? It's more frustratingly difficult, than interestingly so.

The graphics are brightly coloured and amusing, though lacking in detail. Musically it scores highly — with a highly suitable loony Rob Hubbard tune, changing to match each individual screen.

I can't help thinking Firebird have made an error of judgement with this game. Not because of the subject matter. Some people will say it's offensive, but programmer Mev Dink (yes, that is his name) thinks it's just funny. Make up your own mind about that. The real error of judgement was making it a Hot game — it should have been a cheapie.

Eugene Lacey

Graphics	★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★
Staying Power	★
Value	★

THEY SOLD A MILLION II
Commodore 64/128
Ocean
Price: £9.95/disk

Compilation tapes are arriving thick and fast these days with at least one collection being announced each week.

Ocean and US Gold are uniquely positioned to clean up here because of the vast number of titles in their product range — especially now that they have a stake in Ultimate.

In view of this, many gamers may be surprised by the four titles chosen for *They Sold A Million II*.

Two of them appear to be very strange choices. In fact, you could even question whether the four titles did actually sell a million.

Match Day definitely didn't contribute many sales towards the total as it never appeared by itself in the first place. Of course you could argue that there is nothing in a name. Anyway, here is what the reviewers said about the four games when they were first launched.

ENTOMBED

The second title in Ultimate's Arthur Pendragon saga and many gamers would say it is the best. A quest beneath the pyramids to find the Ancient Eye of Osiris. Described as a "classic arcade adventure that'll keep you at the computer for hours". A Commodore User Screen Star.

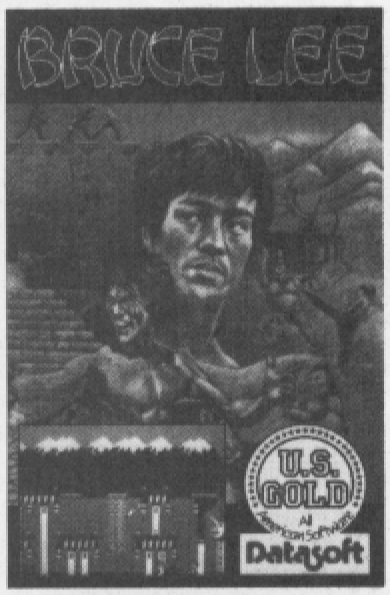
Presentation	★★★★
Skill Level	★★★
Interest	★★★
Value	★★★

BRUCE LEE

This should be a popular option on *They Sold A Million II* — the first of the smash hit martial arts games. It may seem a bit dated by comparison with some of the latest karate games — *Fist*, *Yie Ar*, and *Kung Fu Master* — but it was the daddy of them all and very popular it was too when launched way back in winter '84.

You play the part of the late, great, kung fu king — Bruce Lee. You are pursued through various levels of platform screens by the Ninja and the giant Green Yammo. Punches and kicks can be meted out to deal with these nasties — but in the case of the Yammo several direct hits are required to see him off. *Commodore User* raved about this game in our December '84 issue.

Presentation	★★★
Skill Level	★★★
Interest	★★★
Value for money	★★★



MATCH DAY

Bit difficult to say anything about this one as we haven't seen it yet. It has appeared on the Spectrum where it did reasonably well. It is going to have to be better than just reasonably good to cut it on the 64 — where *International Soccer* still reigns supreme as the number one football game.

MATCH POINT

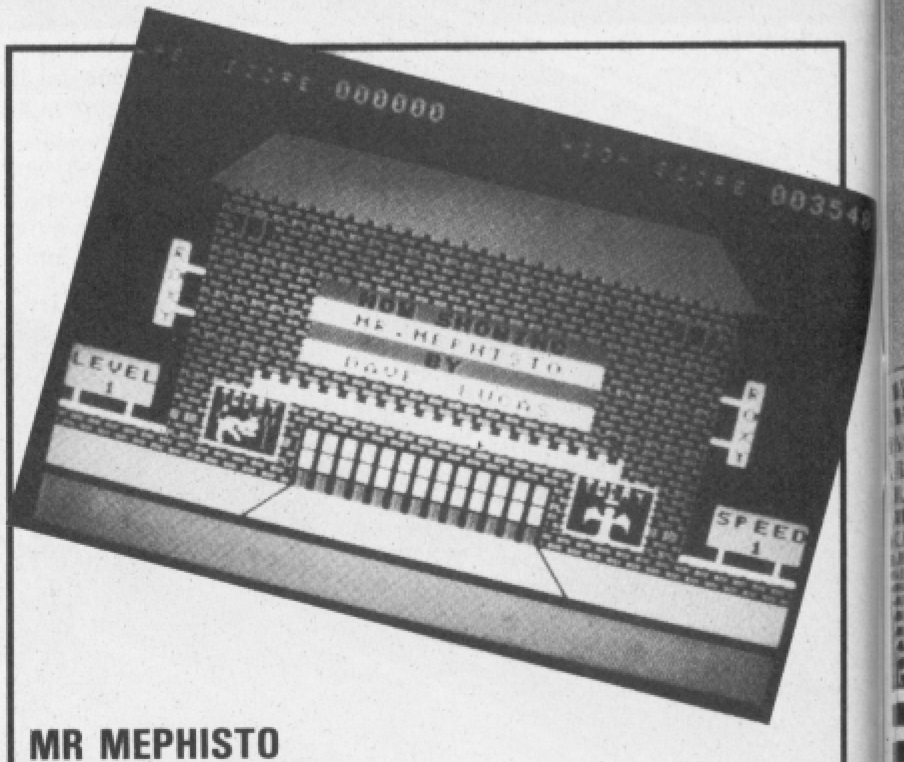
Another sports game and another conversion from a Spectrum original. Its graphics and sound effects failed to impress on the Commodore. If you really want a tennis simulation then this will serve the purpose. It has to be said though, that it is nothing to write home about and certainly there is still room for a decent tennis game for the 64. Any takers?

Presentation	★★
Skill Level	★★★
Interest	★★
Value for money	★★

CONCLUSION

Two good games and two fairly average ones. On balance you are still getting a much better deal than if you bought, say, four Mastertronic cheapies. I can't help thinking though that Ocean could have afforded to put three really good games on *They Sold A Million II* — rather than just two. I rename this game *They Sold Half A Dozen*.

Eugene Lacey



MR MEPHISTO
Commodore 64/128
Bug Byte
Price: £1.99/cass

Whatever happened to Bug Byte? And all their hit games such as . . . well er . . . do you know any? No wonder they went bust! Well now they're back with a new range of budget games. Will they be any better, or can they get worse (is it possible?) The game is all about getting out of hell and climbing the stairway to heaven (wasn't that a record?) — *Yeah, a duff one too — Ed.*

The instructions compare the game with life itself "Fraught with little problems". The phrase itself is an understatement the word little should be replaced with "Almost impossible" — becoming an angel is no piece of cake!

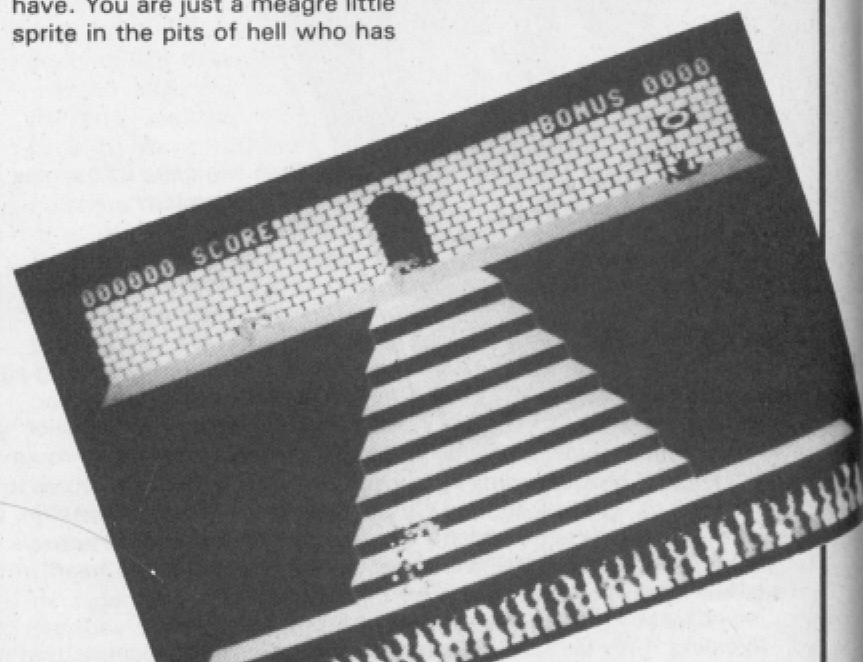
When you start on the first sheet you realise what a task you have. You are just a meagre little sprite in the pits of hell who has to get past large demons on a moving stairway going in the opposite direction to you.

On your way you must collect various heavenly items such as halos. And to make it worse the sound doesn't make it any easier to cope with either. Obviously Bug Byte's idea of sound is a loud whirring noise. You're best off turning your telly down as soon as you have loaded this awful game. The graphics are no better either and the colours are awful, I would have been glad to own a black & white T.V.

There are six hellishly frustrating screens to complete before you can meet Jesus and the rest of the gang. But don't fall off any stairways or it's straight back to screen one.

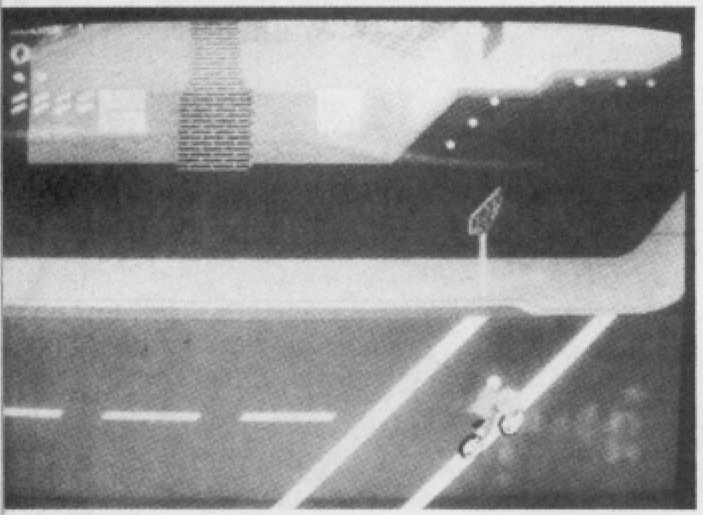
If the game was anything like life, I'm sure we would all have commited suicide by now!

Ferdy Hamilton



Graphics	★★
Sound	★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★★


Another stunning new arcade conversion
from Elite
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It's easy enough to cross Easy Street.

PAPER BOY

When you look around the software houses at the games they have in the pipeline a very clear trend is emerging — a major shift back to arcade conversions.

This time last year the picture was entirely different with some highly original projects appearing — *Impossible Mission, Shadowfire*, and *Boulder Dash* to name but three.

Now the wheel has come full circle with no less than eight arcade-to-home conversions in the Top Twenty. Elite started it all off with their monster hit — *Commando*, even if Ocean did tie up a whole range of Konami titles prior to this.

Melbourne House were in there too with *Marble Madness* (Er, *Gyroscope* — I should say), and US Gold with their chart-topping *Kung Fu Master*. Now several arcade conversions are about to hit the shops.

Elite have just launched *Bomb Jack*, with *Ghosts and Goblins* almost ready, and *Paper Boy* on the boiler.

The big one as far as Elite are concerned is *Paper Boy*. This Atari coin-op proved mightily popular in the arcades when it challenged gamers to take on the most hazardous of paper rounds.

The householders are not at all grateful to receive their morning news with nasty messages written on their door mats like 'get lost'. Deal with these by zapping them with a fat weekend edition of the local rag.

The game was most famous for its novel controls — proper bicycle handlebars complete with rubber grip pads. Elite will not be issuing a set of handlebars with each copy of the game but they are confident of providing most of the game's main features in the conversion — including the break dancers, and BMX assault course.

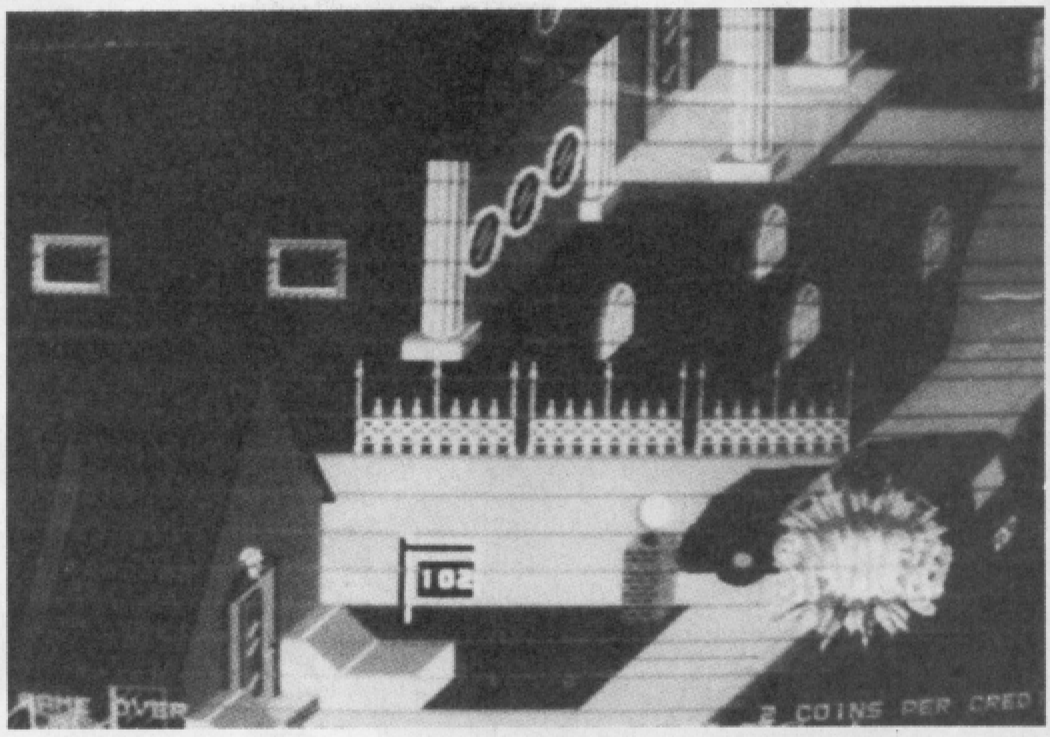
CU reported last month on Ocean's conversion of the Konami arcade game — *Green Beret*. This is the one I'm waiting to see. It challenges you to rescue five hostages that are tied to posts before a firing squad.

If you've played this in the arcades then you won't need to listen to me raving about the speed and quality of the graphics. Ocean have Dave 'Rambo' Collier coding this one so the chances of an accurate conversion are pretty high.

Melbourne House also have some of their programmers beavering away on a coin-op conversion. Last time I was in their plush new offices I caught sight of an arcade machine called *Jail Break*, another scrolling shoot 'em up in which you have to rescue the guards and citizens who are being terrorised by a gang of escaped cons.

I am told this game is so violent it was withdrawn from certain arcades when it was first launched.

Dangerous driver — a car backs out in front of you.



GOLF CONSTRUCTION SET

Thankfully not all the games under development are straight shoot 'em up arcade conversions. Come on, admit it, things would be pretty boring if they were. What do you mean, no?

Well, anyway, Ariolasoft have another *Construction Set* on the way, which, from what I've seen so far, could easily be the best one since the brilliant *Pinball Construction Set*.

Called *Golf Construction Set*, you play a complete eighteen-hole course against a friend or against the computer.

The screen is divided into three sections with a miniature golfer swinging his club at the bottom. To select the strength of the stroke you simply press fire. If you want to hit the ball hard, let your man swing the club right above his head. A weaker stroke is made by taking the swing to hip height only.

As in the real thing, you select a putter once you get on to the green, a wood for attacking the fairway, and one of the irons for bunkers, rough grass and other hazards.

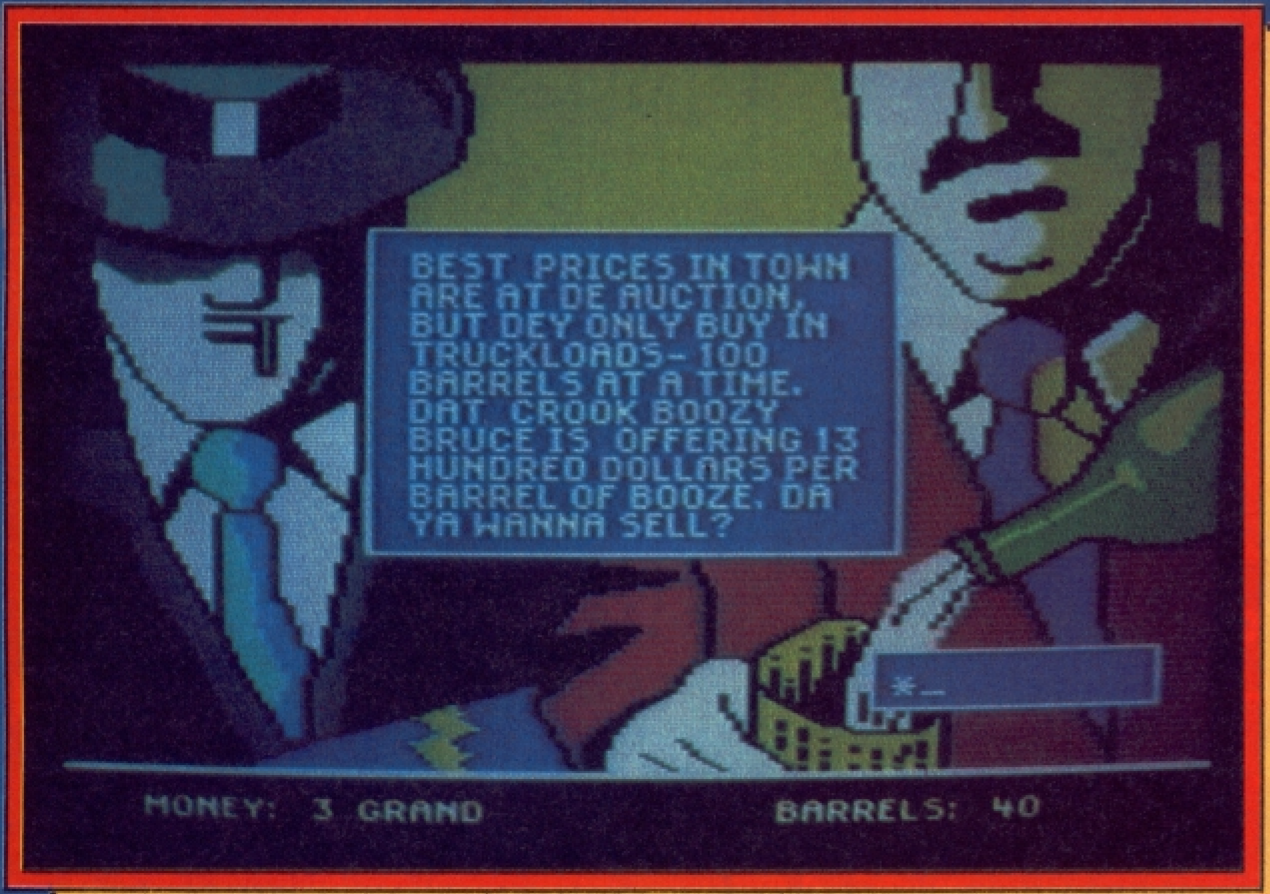
This business of selecting clubs for certain shots and the gradual leisurely way in which you progress around the course gives this simulation the feel of the real thing.

Best of all, though, is the designer part of the program. This enables you to construct a complete eighteen-hole course as tough or as easy as you like.

We will have a full review of *Golf Construction Set* next issue.

Looks like being a birdy at the first





Text takes up only a small area of the screen but it scrolls smoothly upwards.

MUGSY'S REVENGE
Commodore 64/128
Melbourne House
Price: £6.95/disk

Quite why this game is called *Mugsy's Revenge* is a mystery to me as the original Mugsy game never made it onto the 64.

Fortunately for 64 owners *Mugsy's Revenge* is now out and offers you the opportunity to make like a real Chicago gangster.

It's 1919. Prohibition prevents the legal consumption of alcohol across America — and Mugsy and his gang of hoodlums aim to get rich running Canadian moonshine across the border.

Mugsy's Revenge is basically a trading game where you must buy and sell moonshine, nightclubs, hire hoods and pay off the cops — with the computer acting as banker.

But don't get the impression that you can play the game like a good accountant for there are also random elements built into the program that will thwart you if you are too cautious — like the Feds who are always ready to pounce, and the Organisation who will begin to get jealous if you get too successful.

A trading game may not seem like much to you and to be honest if it weren't for the highly impressive graphics you would have to dismiss the game for lack of playability.

But those graphics are so good they do put it into a higher category. One of these screens shows a pool with a neon sign that plays through a sequence with each letter lighting up one by one until the whole thing flashes, turns off, and then begins again. I gazed at this for minutes — it's so pretty.



Just one example of this game's many high-quality graphic screens.

The game play unfolds through scrolling text in windows superimposed on the gangster-like picture screens. You make most of your entries through fairly simple one-key commands. For example the number of barrels of moonshine you want to buy, or the number of hoods to be hired.

There are also a number of arcade sequences which are shoot-outs with rival gangs. Fairly simple stuff this — up, down, left, right and space bar for fire using the keybord to play. I say fairly simple, but these shoot outs do come as welcome relief from the business of buying and selling and making money.

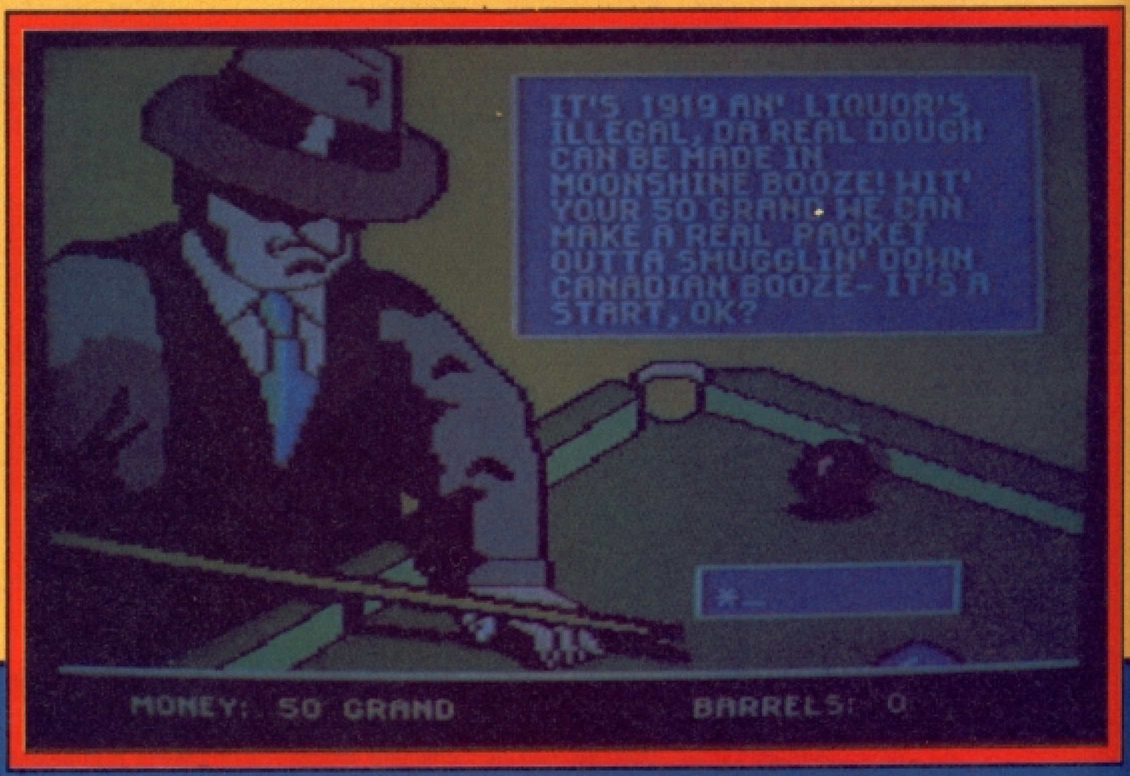
It's important to make a profit in *Mugsy's Revenge*. If you finish the year with less than you started "your boys" will take over the operation. They don't mince words either. After a particularly bad trading year I was told "you couldn't run a kindergarten".

The gangster-speak is kept up throughout the game. Attention to detail must have also necessitated much study of 1920's fashion as the gangsters are dressed so authentically right down to their spats.

It's a pity that these excellent graphics, and a nice rag-time sound track were wasted on *Mugsy's Revenge* because the truth of the matter is that there isn't a lot to it.

Eugene Lacy

Graphics	★★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★
Staying Power	★
Value	★



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IWO JIMA
Commodore 64/128
PSS
Price: £7.95/cass
disk special offer only

Iwo Jima is the latest in the Wargamers series from PSS. Written by the author of *Falklands '82*, the similarities between the games cannot be ignored. Where *Falklands '82* simulated the British assault on Port Stanley, *Iwo Jima* simulates the US Marine Corps attack on the island of Iwo Jima in the pacific Ocean during WWII.

Considering the rapid development in programming, we expected at least a few improvements over *'82*, but were disappointed.

The object of the game is to land US Marine regiments on the island, capture airfields and (yawn) destroy the Japanese to the last Toyota. By use of either joystick or keyboard, units are designated and then each must through the tedious process of attack, movement or landing.

Play takes place in the usual turn sequence of such games — the player moves/fires/lands all of his units, then the computer does the same for the Japanese. Combat is accompanied by possibly the worst machine-gunfire sound ever simulated on the Commodore.

At frequent intervals little airplane icons fly across the screen in 'bombing runs' or 'kamikaze' attacks which are made all the more annoying by their apparent pointlessness. No doubt they mean something, but it's not immediately obvious to the player, and that's the cardinal sin of programming this type of game.

Terrain, minefields, headquarters units, artillery, tanks they're all here, and the programmer obviously did a lot of background research, but the wealth of detail provided does little to enhance the playability of the game.

Graphically, the display is weaker than *Falklands '82* — more detail, but everything is so cramped together on the screen that the extra hassle of peering at a tiny icon to determine whether it's a tank or an infantryman, will probably leave you with a permanent squint.

The Pacific War has never been a very popular wargame topic, apart from, of course, in the USA. Frankly *Iwo Jima* does not stand up against the numerous releases already established, it neither has the broad base of a detailed campaign to draw on, nor a quirky graphic or sound system of note.

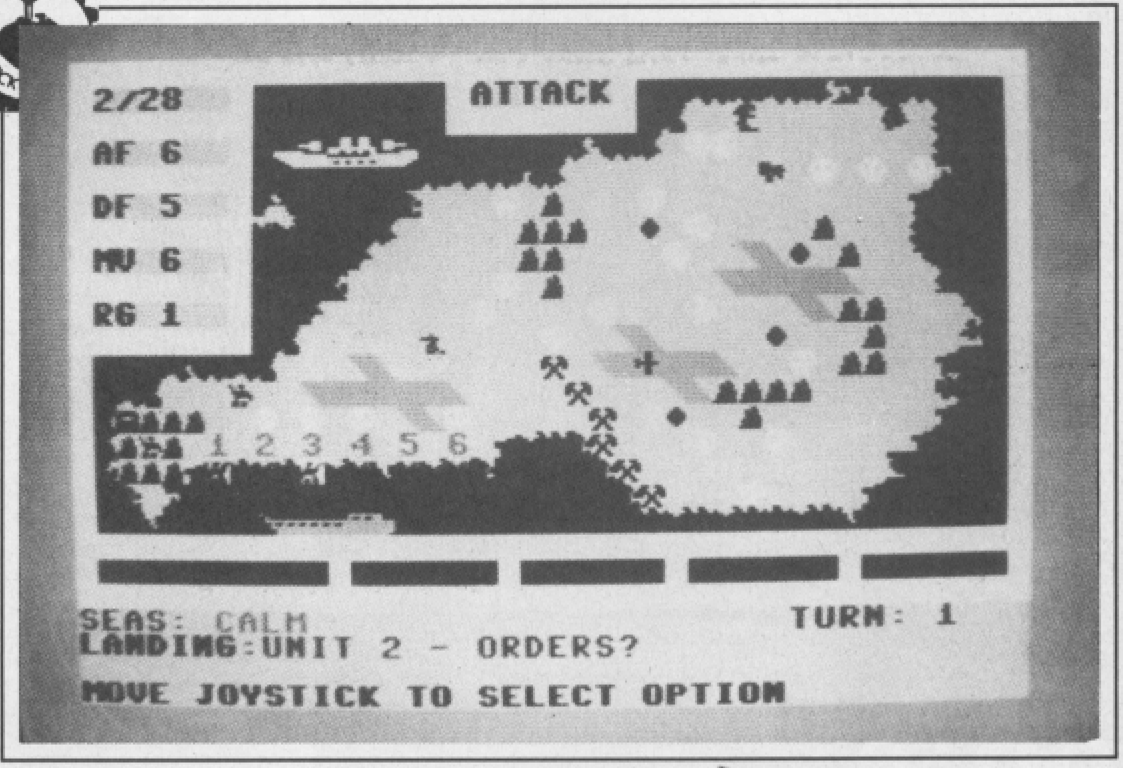
Dedicated wargame buffs will no doubt buy it, those with a passing interest will ignore it and those looking for something new and different would be extremely disappointed if they do buy it.

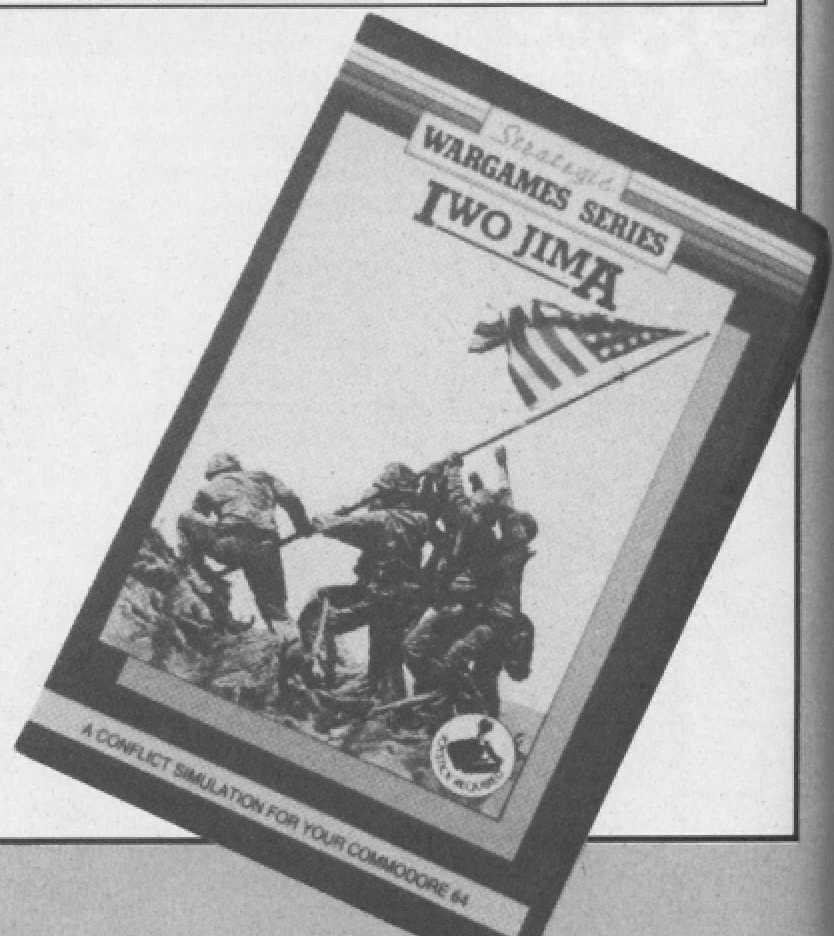
The initial promise of John Bethell's talent as seen in *Falklands '82* has not lived up to expectation. It is very hard to see what John did between writing the two games except look around for a similar situation, an island, a naval landing and a bloodbath battle to the end. PSS no doubt thought they had hit on a winning system. Try something else lads for god's sake! No Wake Island, Normandy or Sicily games like this PLEASE!

Let's see John's skills utilized with a small scale infantry and tank action game, we'll promise not to criticise his machine gun.

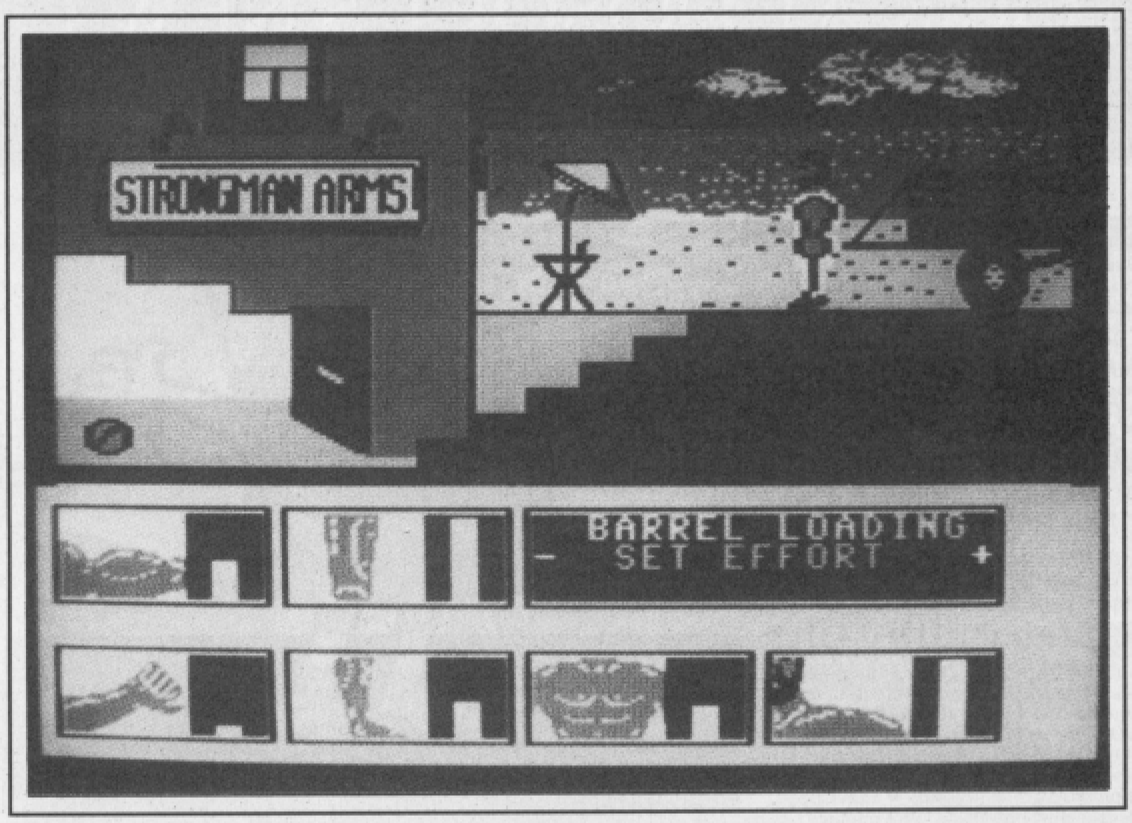
Simon Farrell
& Jon Sutherland

Graphics	★★
Sound	★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★★★





GEOFF CAPES STRONGMAN
Commodore 64/128
Martech
Price: £8.95/cass



Roll out the barrel — Geoff must lift and carry it up the stairs and onto the truck.

Geoff Capes has a lot to be unhappy about lately. First of all Commodore User spells his name incorrectly on the front cover of the December issue (er, sorry, Geoff, grovel grovel). Then his game arrives about three months late and, to top it all, the music that accompanies the final version is an uptempo rendition of the lumberjack song.

I also have a sneaking suspicion that he is not going to go overboard about the game either. Or at least he wouldn't do if he were a seasoned 64 gamer.

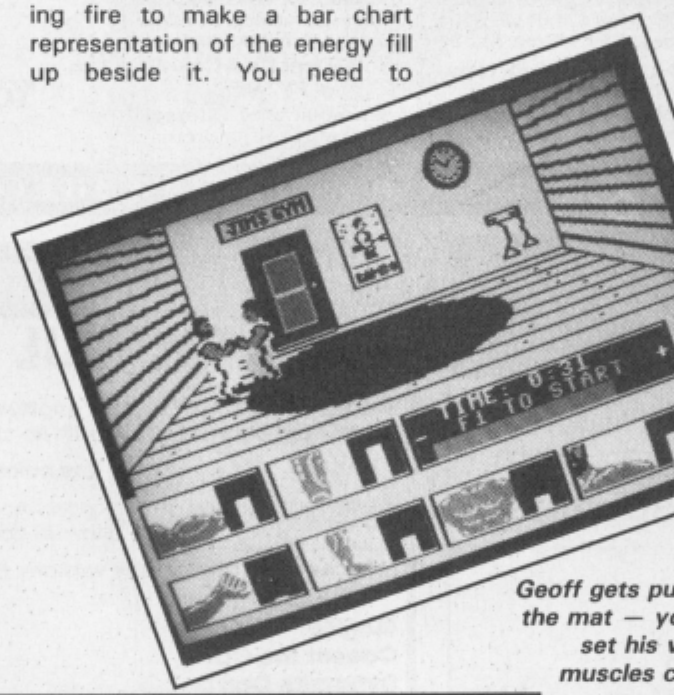
It's not that it's particularly bad — it's just not going to earn Geoff Capes mega bucks like Ocean's game did for Daley Thompson.

It's just too intricate — and this intricacy is in no way entertaining. In the barrel loading event, for example, you have to walk down the steps to the cellar, hoist a barrel above your head and take it back to the lorry.

The most difficult part of this is not the lift itself but negotiating the steps. Put a foot wrong and you take a fall and must begin again.

Beginning again is another tedious part of the game. Each time you start a new event you have to allocate energy to each muscle and decide how much effort you are going to put in.

This is a laborious business of moving a cursor around Geoff's seven major muscles and pressing fire to make a bar chart representation of the energy fill up beside it. You need to calculate this carefully to suit each event.



Geoff gets pushed off the mat — you didn't set his wrestling muscles correctly.

The Tug-O-War calls for strong legs, log chopping strong arms, and so on. It would have been better if you could have got this over and done with at the beginning of the game.

That said, I did enjoy playing a number of the events. Rolling the car took a great deal of skill and there was a great feeling of achievement as it toppled over.

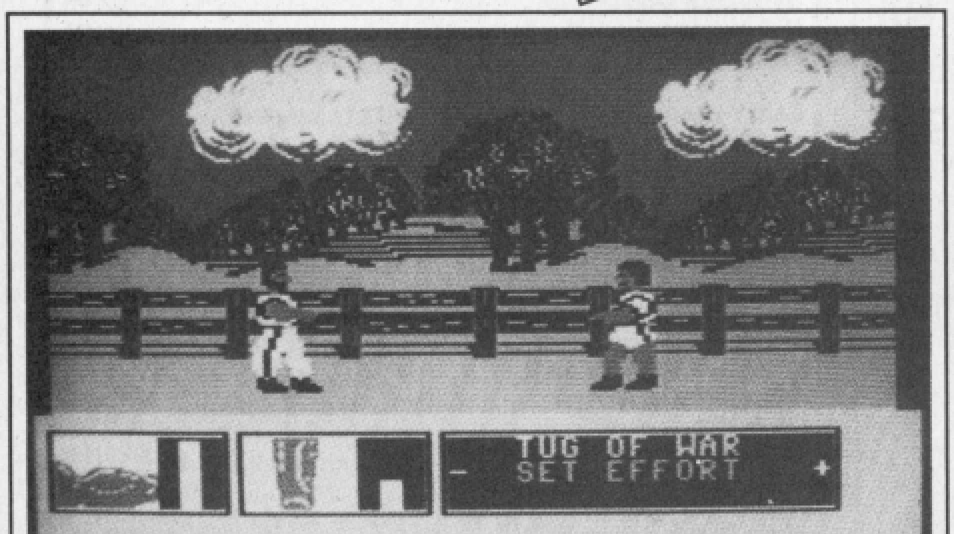
Bashing the fairground hammer to ring the bell was also fun especially as I have always wanted to have a go on these machines.

Over-all, I didn't get that much out of the game. The events are too isolated — with no interconnecting theme. It lacks the feeling that you are competing for something.

Geoff Capes Strongman appears to be one of the few games I've seen that doesn't improve with its conversion to the 64. It lacks the detail in the graphics that the original Amstrad version had, and its icons are not incorporated into the game like they were in that version. They are really just unnecessary frills on the 64. Most disappointing of all, the game doesn't have the lorry-pull event — which was the highlight of the original.

This is a classic example of a game with a lot of promising new ideas that just doesn't work.

Eugene Lacey



Make Geoff's arm and leg muscles bulge in the Tug-of-War.

Graphics	★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★
Staying Power	★★
Value	★

Living on the edge of an eternal galaxy, battling with opponents who seem to be reading your mind, you are about to captain your ship through one of the great edge-of-your seat adventures of the 35th Century.

Sitting on a mother lode of rich mining deposits, a new quadrant called the Parvin Frontier, is a mecca for settlers; entrepreneurs on both sides of the law; and some of the worst scum in the universe.

These space carrions have been the scourge of the shipping lanes; and as things stand now they are on the brink of starving out the entire quadrant and holding it hostage.

No wonder the inhabitants of the Parvin Frontier will pay almost anything to anyone who can get through to them with a freight ship full of supplies from the outside world.

But it's a tall order to fill, even for the experienced captain of the Psi-5 Trading Company; because, needless to say, these marauders are not going to take too kindly to any last ditch efforts to spoil their little intergallactic carnage.



So, if you're ripe for a stiff challenge and feel comfortable in the role of Space Freighter Captain, your ship just came in.

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As captain of the Space Freighter, you must constantly delegate authority throughout the mission. With space outlaws on the horizon, what do you repair first – the defence shields or your weapons?

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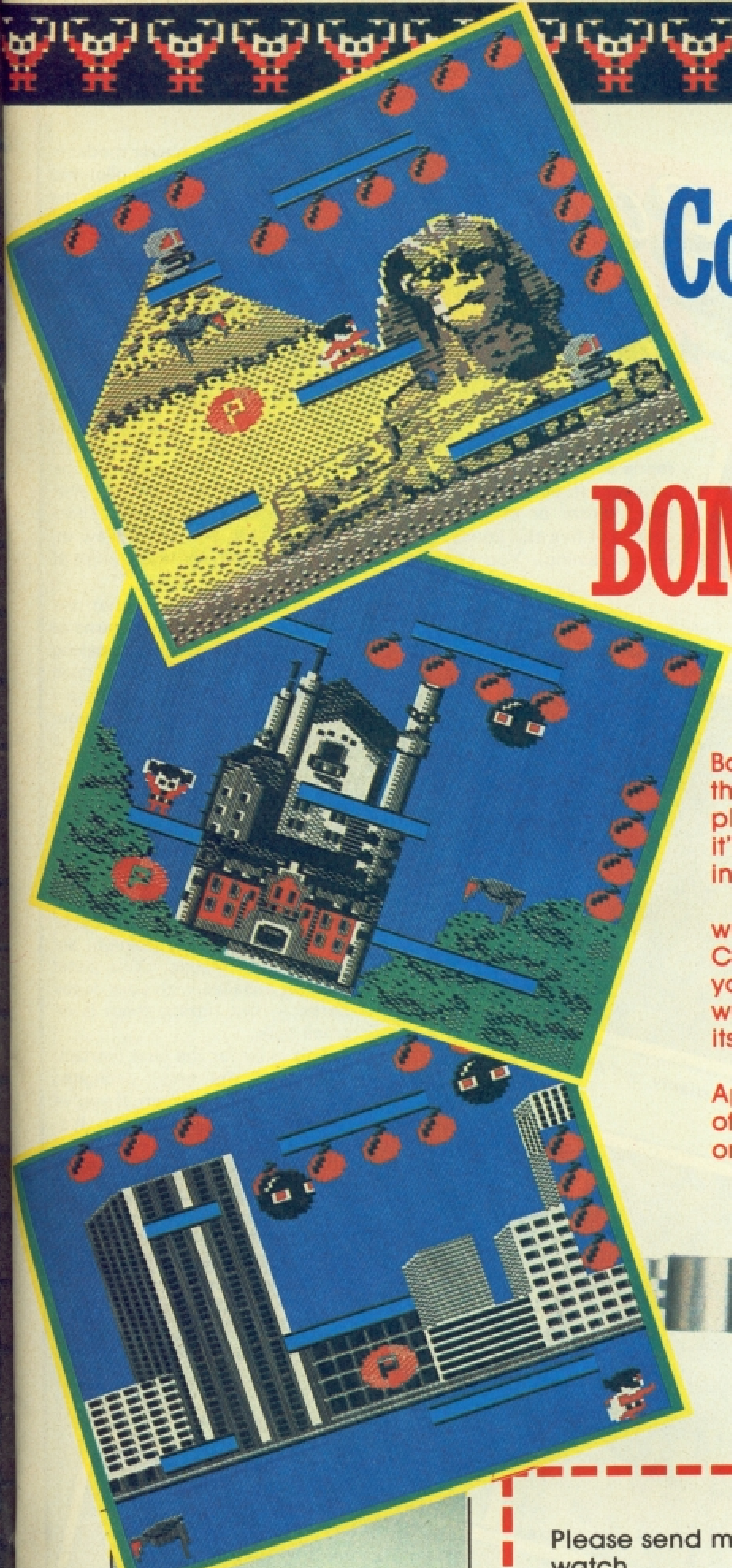
Manufactured under licence by U.S. Gold Ltd, Unit 10, The Parkway Industrial Centre, Heneage Street, Birmingham B7 4LY.

*Screen as seen on Commodore 64

64

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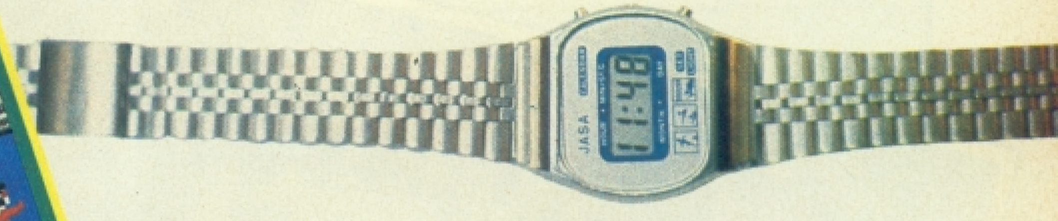
Commodore User/Elite

BOMB JACK OFFER

Bomb Jack is Elite's latest arcade conversion for the Commodore 64, a really tough, bouncing platform game. We've seen a preview disk and it's looking really good — and all set for release in late March.

We reckon you're going to like Bomb Jack. So we've done a deal with Elite, exclusive to Commodore User gamers, in which you can get your hands on it for just £7.95 AND a free digital watch thrown in. That's two quid off the game itself — how can you go wrong?

Just fill in the order form below before the 25th April and Elite will send you your very own copy of Bomb Jack and free digital watch. Remember, orders must be sent to Elite at the address below.





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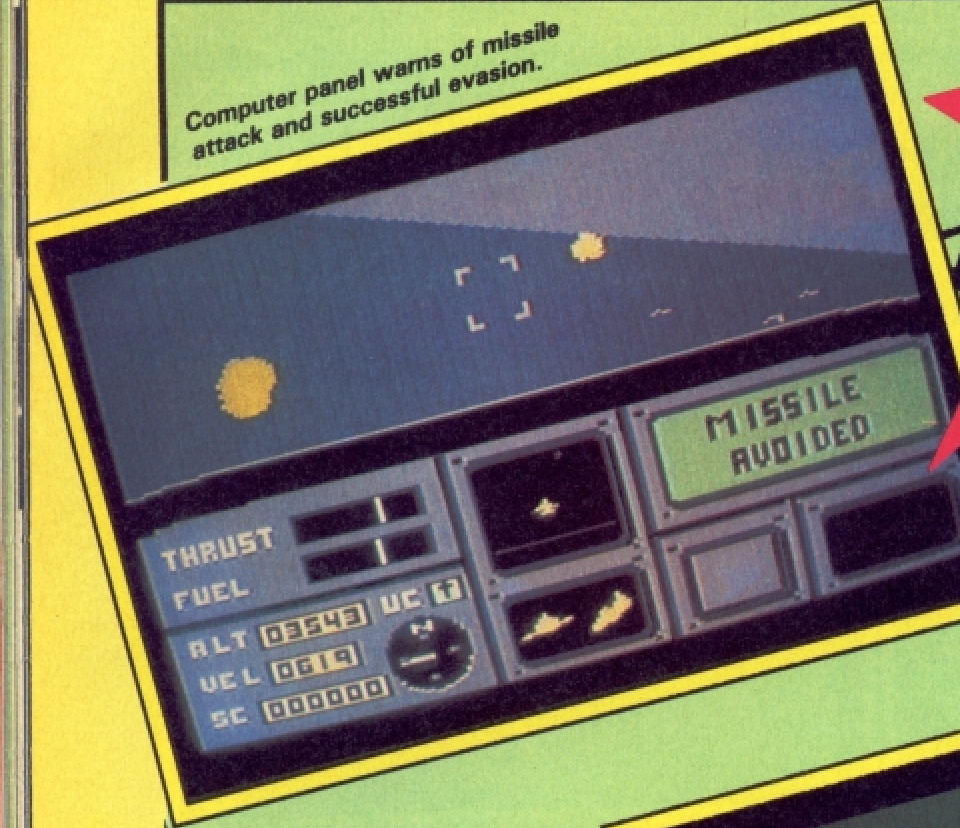
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Screen Star

Computer panel warns of missile attack and successful evasion.



ACE

Commodore Plus/4
Cascade Software
Price: £10.95/cass

At long last, Plus/4 owners have a game that wasn't written for the 16 but actually takes advantage of the machine's full 64K.

ACE actually stands for Air Combat Emulator — exactly what this game is about. You have to pilot ACE and take care of the enemy craft you come across. Seat belts on and here we go!

When the game is loaded, the menu screen presents you with a number of options: fly in summer, winter or at night, and a choice of five skill levels (the first is for training). You can opt for either one or two player mode: in the latter, you get both pilot and weapons man, who operates the weapons using the keyboard.

An additional option is choosing a particular type of enemy — air, sea, ground or multi-role. Now to battle.

You wait patiently in your cockpit until you've gained enough speed. Then pull back, raise the undercarriage and you're away.

Look down and you'll see plenty of dials and panels. The plane's computer shows your altitude, speed and fuel. There are also side and front view indicators which show the angle of roll and pitch.

One nice touch is that the computer output panel warns of any dangers by actually speaking to you — sounds pretty good too. Underneath that, there's your rear-view camera and your weapons panel. There's also a radar screen with icons representing what's around you. You can also call up the computer's map to help you look around.

Learning how to fly ACE is certainly not easy but I'll guarantee you'll want to put in enough effort to master it. The toughest of the enemies, in my opinion, are the enemy planes. You deter their air missiles with your decoy flares — but hitting them is no small task.

This is by far the best (certainly one of the only) dedicated Plus/4 games I've seen. If you've got one, go out and buy this. It's, er, ace.

Ferdy Hamilton

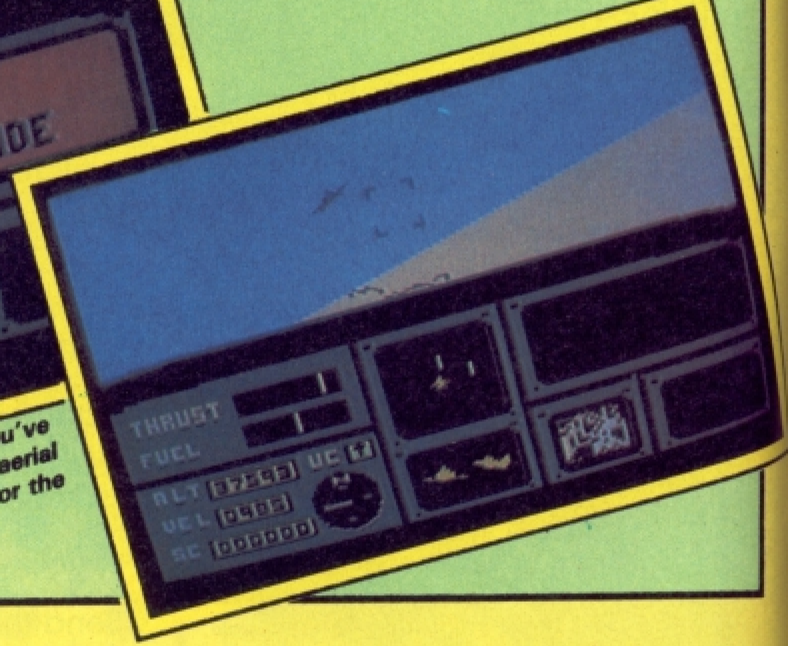
Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★



Computer map shows enemy and allied position.

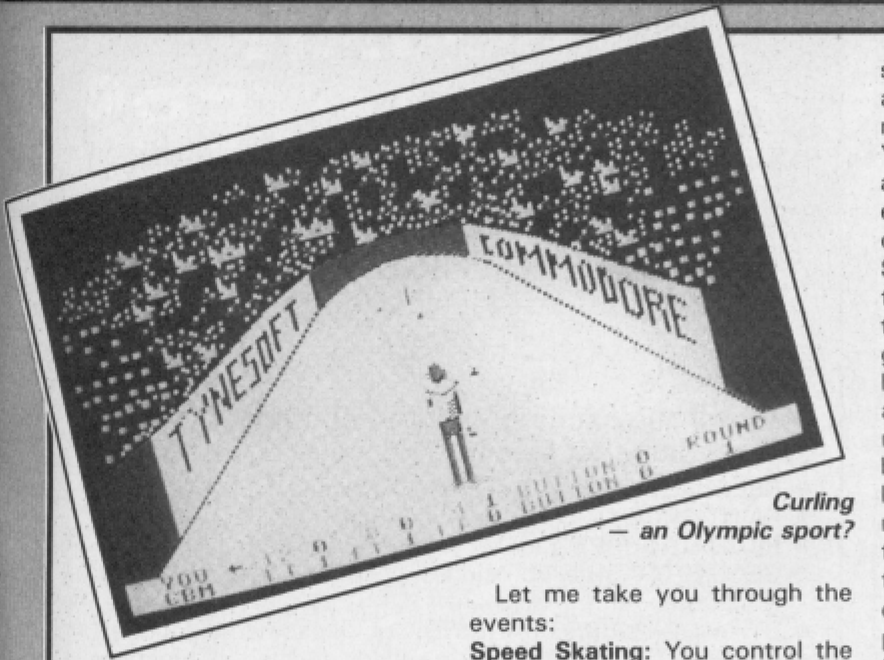


Low-flying through the summer greenery — there's also a winter and night option.



Make sure you've chosen aerial weapons for the dogfight.

C 16



Curling — an Olympic sport?

WINTER OLYMPICS
Commodore 16 and Plus/4
Tynesoft
Price: £6.95/disk

At first sight this looks promising. A version of the brilliant and hugely successful Winter Games for the C16. But, as luck would have it Winter Olympics turns out to be hugely disappoinnting. Tynesoft seem to have a talent for producing naff games and this one is no exception.

Winter Olympics is actually six naff games in one package. If I was feeling charitable I might say that one of them, ski salom, was at least half decent, but it only looks good because it's in such diabolically bad company.

Let me take you through the events:

Speed Skating: You control the little skater in the top half of the screen, the 16 controls the one on the bottom. Wiggle the joystick back and forth to make him go faster. It's more a question of timing and co-ordination than sheer frantic wiggling. Despite that I managed to beat the computer on my second attempt. After that the only option is to improve on your personal best.

Ski Jump: Some nice scenery here, but total lack of gameplay. Your man flies down the slope and you must press the fire button at precisely the right moment to launch him into the air. Pull back on the joystick to land, then press fire to straighten up or you'll end up on your backside. Takes about five minutes to master.

Cresta Run: You get a cross-section view of the run with the sledge hopefully in the middle and overhead view of the route so you know when the corners are coming up. Probably the most difficult game to complete. You must lean into the corners to avoid flying off the course. This event has potential, but is let down by boring screen display.

Ski Slalom: Guide your skier through the gates as in the real thing. If you miss a gate you're given a time penalty and if you hit one that's your lot. Speed up and slow down at crucial moments using joystick back/forwards. This was the only event that aroused my excitement at all. Although it doesn't take long to acquire enough skill to complete the course, the incentive is there to try and improve your time.

Curling: I just didn't understand what was going on here. What's more I got the feeling that if I had it wouldn't really have been any more interesting.

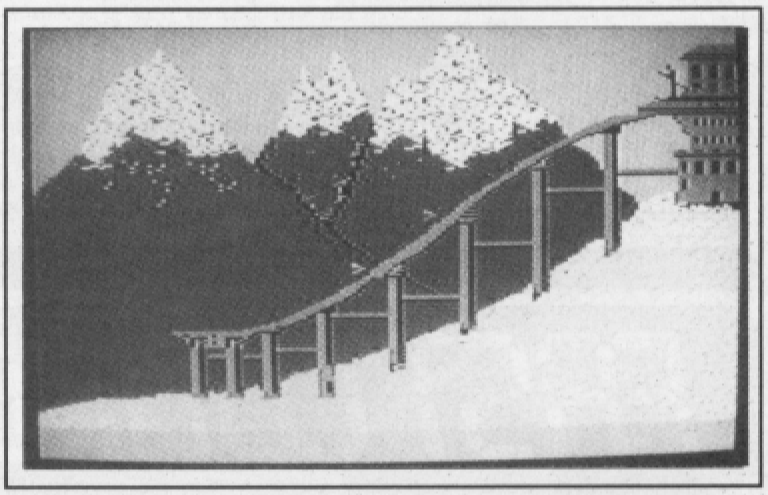
Downhill: The same as slalom, only with trees instead of gates. I felt conned.

The only good thing I can find to say about Winter Olympics is that it's not as bad as Mount Vesuvius. I've made a belated New Year resolution to avoid Tynesoft games and I'd advise you to steer well clear of this one.

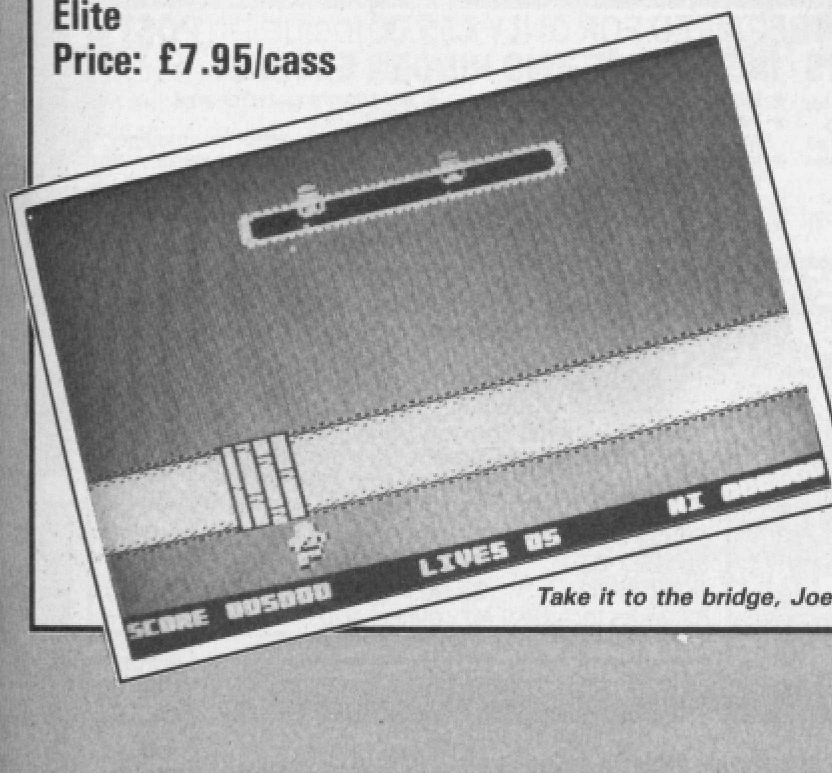
Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★
Sound	★★
Toughness	★★
Staying Power	★
Value	★

Ski Jump — never knew it could be so easy.



COMMANDO
Commodore 16 and Plus/4
Elite
Price: £7.95/cass



Take it to the bridge, Joe.

This is the conversion all you C16 gamers have been waiting for. Is it nice to feel wanted at last now the games houses realise there's a bit of money to be made out of you?

Well I think you're going to be pleased with this one. Elite have made a fairly good job of the conversion. Don't expect an easy ride though. Commando may be quicker to complete on the C16 but it's certainly not easier.

The action isn't so trigger-fast as the 64 version, but you have to get to grips with the limited manoeuvreability of GI Joe. Just pretend that he's got a piece of shrapnel in his leg or something.

This means that he has to be shifted using fast stabs on the stick. Another added problem is that the ground seems to have been plastered down with large dobs of Evostik, so poor Joe gets bogged down very easily.

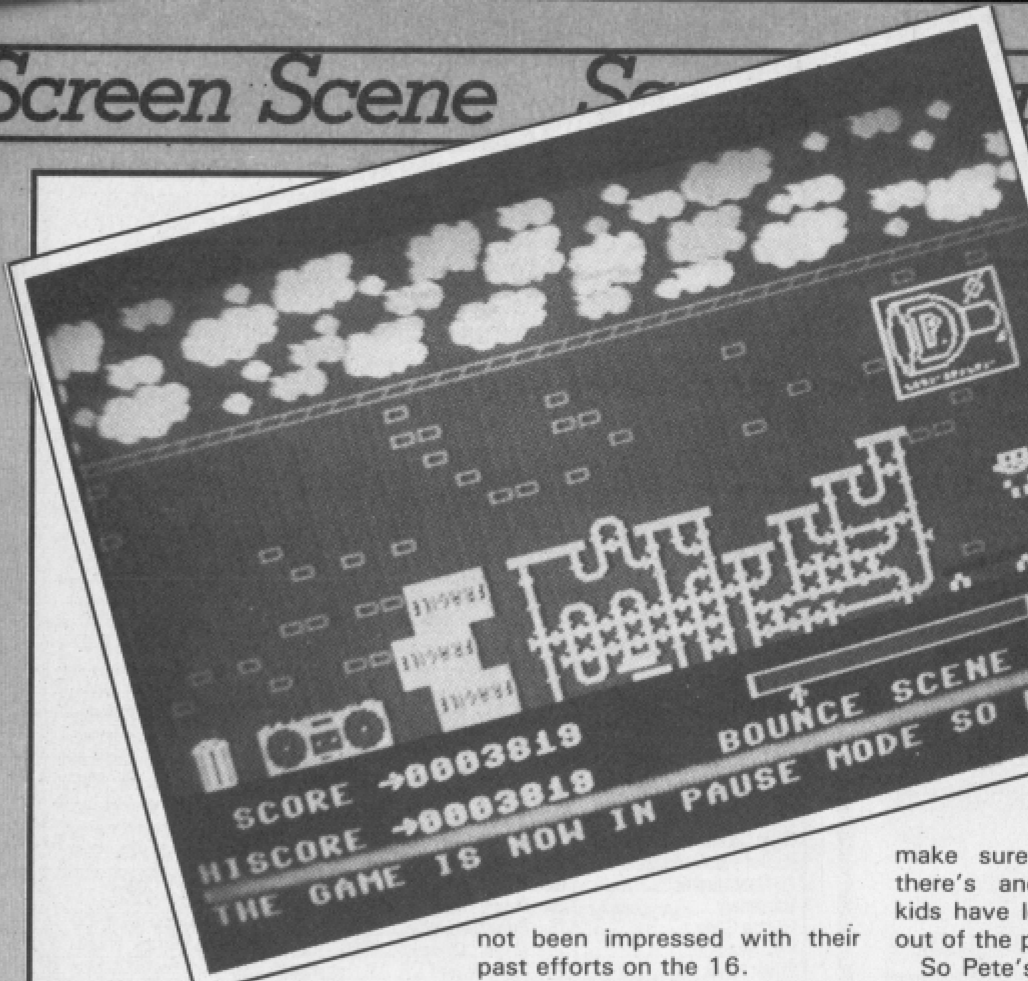
The other nasty feature of this game is the wicked crossfire. If you stand still for a moment you can watch your lives tick away like seconds off the clock.

The key is to manoeuvre Joe into a position where he's in a safe spot from the wicked crossfire. Then shoot left and right to take out the enemy positions. This will work with no problems on zone one, but is not so easy on the next screen. When you get cut down on this level — as you most surely will, you will end up back to square one but with more lives.

No complaints here. The conversion works — which is more than can be said for some — and it has good graphics. This game is a must for all C16 and Plus/4 owners.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★



POGO PETE
Commodore 16 and Plus/4
Tynesoft
Price: £6.95/disk

Tynesoft do for me what Kryptonite does for Superman. I have not been impressed with their past efforts on the 16.

While I waited for it to load I turned to my usual source of inspiration, the inlay. 'You control a young boy, on a pogo stick, named Pogo Pete.' Funny name for a pogo stick, I wonder what the kid's called.

Anyway, the local kids have built an adventure playground in the street. Pete has to bounce around over all the obstacles to make sure they're safe. And there's another problem. The kids have left a crucial element out of the playground, a tile.

So Pete's first job is to place the tile in the correct position. When he's done this Pete does a 'big bounce for joy', that's so as you know you've got the tile in the right place — possibly the easiest and least interesting part of the game. You just dump tiles all over the shop until you hit the right place.

It gets more interesting when Pete goes into 'daredevil mode' and must bounce from one side of the screen to the other without touching the ground. If you succeed in accomplishing this fairly tricky feat, you get to have a bash at the next screen. If you don't, then it's back to square one, but not before poor old Pete's face goes all out of shape, making him look like a particularly ugly potato.

I've made it sound a lot easier than it is. There is, after all, the bounce meter to take account of. This goes down every time you make a move i.e. left, right, or upwards. Now to get onto some obstacles you have to build up a fair bit of height, trampoline style, by bouncing a lot. Trouble is, if the bounce meter goes off the scale, it's ugly potato time for Pete.

All of this combines to make a really enjoyable game with a fair degree of difficulty. There are 24 screens in all. The graphics on the four I saw were excellent as was the sound. An original and fun game. Come back Tynesoft, all is forgiven.

Ken McMahon

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★★
Toughness	★★★★
Staying Power	★★★★
Value	★★★★

BEACH-HEAD
Commodore 16 and Plus/4
US Gold/Access
Price: £5.95/disk

All you C16 and Plus/4 owners out there must be licking your lips at the prospect of getting your hands on this the daddy of shoot 'em ups.

The question though is how do you convert a game like Beach-Head — which is itself four smaller games in one — to fit into 16K? This was the poser that US Gold set Anirog when they asked them to do the job. Sadly Anirog couldn't work it out.

The problem is that the game just won't function properly. It would be foolhardy to expect it to measure up to the 64 version, but to be any good at all it should have at least kept the fire button fun of the original.

Thus when you come to shoot the planes down in the air attack scenario the gun fails to operate at any elevation below 30°C. It is impossible also to traverse on the line of the plane, because you cannot shoot and manoeuvre at the same time. This means you get one shot at each aircraft.

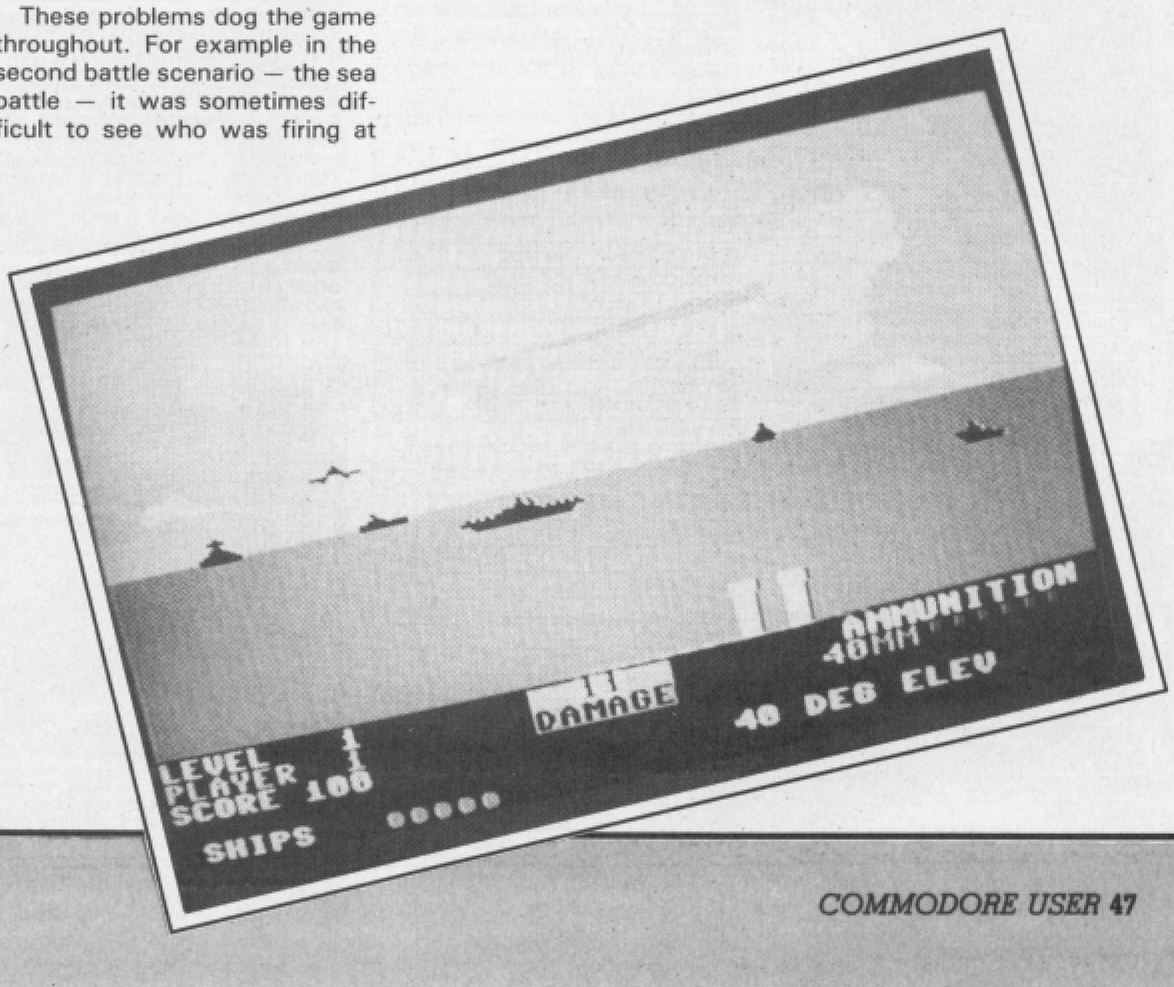
I found the only way to score at all was to leave the gun in a fixed position in the centre of the screen and just wait for them to fly into my line of fire. Not much fun there.

These problems dog the game throughout. For example in the second battle scenario — the sea battle — it was sometimes difficult to see who was firing at you. Safe to say I struggled on the donkey level.

A great shame all of this because the graphics are fine. It looks great but just won't play. Anirog have tried to squeeze the proverbial quart into a pint pot.

Mike Pattenden

Graphics	★★★★
Sound	★★★
Toughness	★★★★★
Staying Power	★
Value	★



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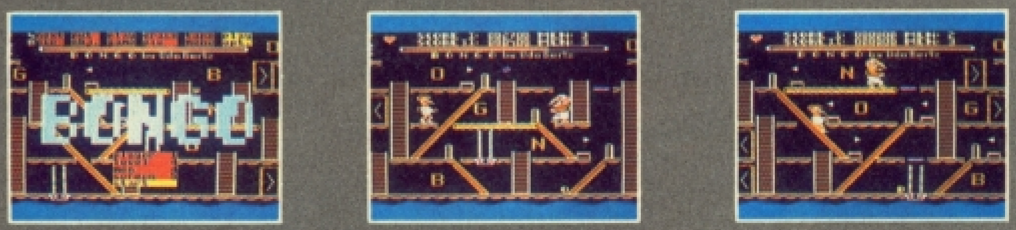


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Commodore 64 Chart

This chart is based on the MicroScope chart as compiled by Gallup.
GALLUP

Chart Chat

A minor hiccup this week stops *Yie Ar Kung Fu* being number one. So you seem to think the inferior *Kung Fu Master* is better?

No *Uridium* or *Zoids* yet because of the timing of this Chart. Have no fear they'll be there.

Nice to see our Cheapo of the Month, *Kane* performing so well among the big boys. Bears out what we said last month.

Surprising though, to see *Mercenary* making a descent down the Chart already — we thought it would have had more staying power.

There should be no real surprise at the entry of an adventure the quality of *Lord of the Rings* into the number 16 spot even though the presence of such games is rare.

Meanwhile on the C16 front Mastertronic carry on laughing all the way to the bank. Next month is *Commando* month, so be prepared for us to say — told you so!

NEW	Kung Fu Master	US Gold
2	Rock 'N' Wrestle	Melbourne House
NEW	Yie Ar Kung Fu	Imagine
NEW	Eidolon	Activision
5	Bounder	Gremlin Graphics
6	Kane	Mastertronic
7	Koronis Rift	Activision
8	Mercenary	Novagen
9	Commando	Elite
10	Winter Games	Epyx/US Gold
NEW	Back to the Future	Electric Dreams
12	Rambo	Ocean
13	The Last V8	Mastertronic
NEW	Desert Fox	US Gold
15	Kik Start	Mastertronic
NEW	Lord of the Rings	Melbourne House
17	Now Game II	Virgin
18	They Sold a Million	Hit Squad
NEW	One Man and his Droid	Mastertronic
NEW	Action Biker	Mastertronic

General

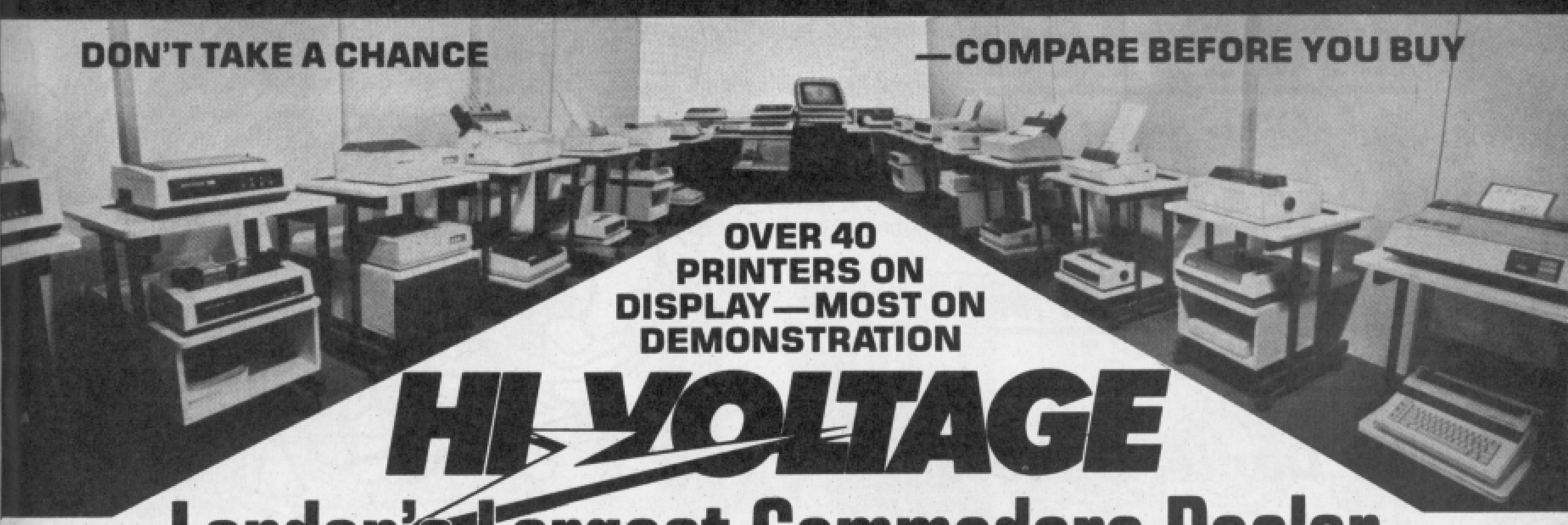
1	Yie Ar Kung Fu	Imagine
NEW	Kung Fu Master	US Gold
3	Formula 1 Simulator	Mastertronic
NEW	Rock 'N' Wrestle	Melbourne House
5	Winter Games	US Gold
6	Elite	Firebird
7	Commando	Elite
8	Hypersports	Imagine
9	BMX Racers	Mastertronic
10	Action Biker	Mastertronic

C16

1	Big Mac	Mastertronic
2	Forumal 1 Simulator	Mastertronic
3	Tutti Frutti	Mastertronic
4	BMX Racers	Mastertronic
5	Kung Fu Kid	Gremlin Graphics
6	Rockman	Mastertronic
7	Squirm	Mastertronic
8	Vegas Jackpot	Mastertronic
NEW	D T Star Events	Ocean
NEW	Spectapede	Mastertronic

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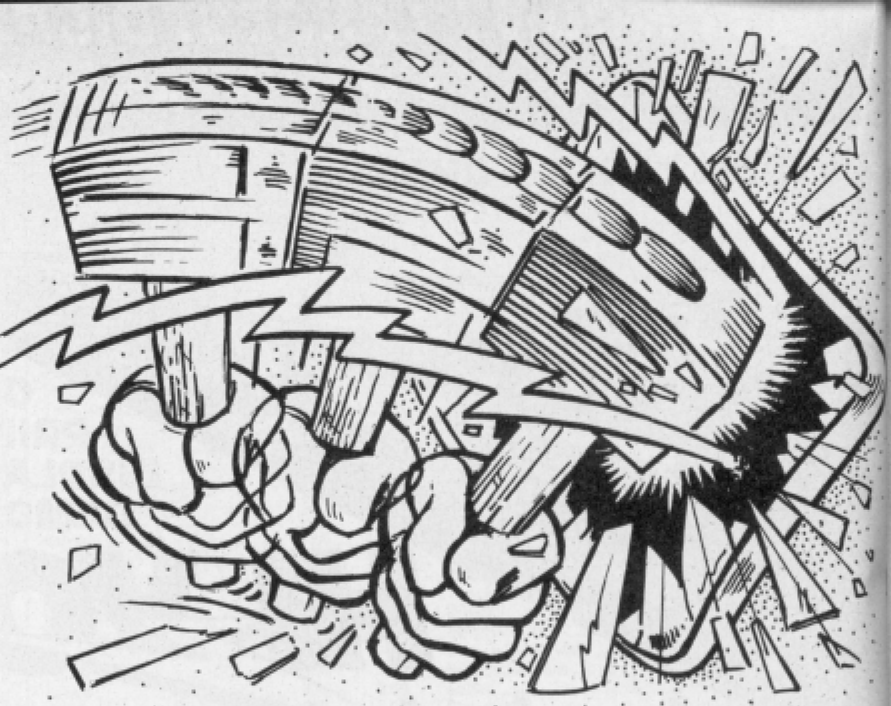
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Licence to Kill



Robtek's Game Killer reviewed

by Daniel Gilbert

If you just can't reach that final screen or the next level or knock up a decent score, don't use a mallet on your tape, let Game Killer loose on it. Game Killer? Yeah, it gives you infinite lives and access to all play levels. Go on, tell us another . . .

The **Game Killer** package is simply a cartridge and a sheet of instructions. It fits easily into the port on the rear of your 64 and having powered-up, you are confronted by an impressive 'title screen' complete with scrolling message, jumping sprites and a very striking tune, written by the musical wizard Rob Hubbard. The cartridge then relinquishes control, giving you the standard power-up screen and you are now free to load a game.

Dressed to Kill

The cartridge has three methods of operation; Robtek suggest trial-and-error to find which suits the particular game you are playing. They are as follows:

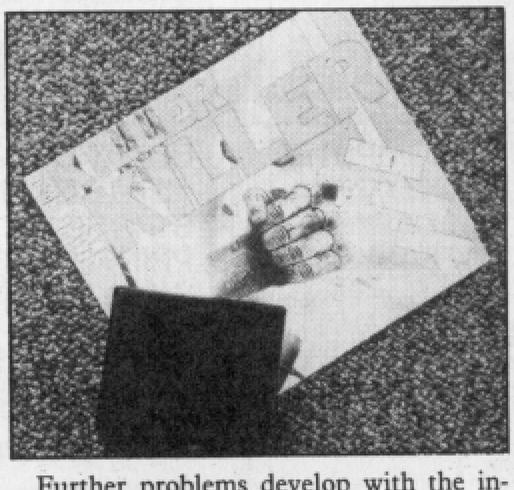
- *Method 1:* disables all the sprite collisions in the game to ensure that "nothing can kill you now".
- *Method 2:* disables only sprite-to-sprite collisions,
- *Method 3:* disables sprite-to-background collisions.

These varieties are achieved by pressing a small (and somewhat fiddly) red button on the side of the cartridge, which results in the screen blanking momentarily and play resuming with no sprite collisions.

The two alternative modes are accessed by moving the joystick up or down when pressing the button. Having done this you may then play the game in 'cheat mode' until you wish to resume normal play. This is achieved by pressing the button and holding fire down on the joystick.

'All well and good,' you may think, 'let's get on and rattle up some large scores' or maybe see the elusive final screen on a few of the more demanding games. Unfortunately this is not the whole story.

The problems begin (fairly obviously) on games which do not rely on sprite collisions to create their element of difficulty. Such is the case with games like *Boulder Dash*, where more complex theory is used in programming than "have you been hit?".



Further problems develop with the inverse of this problem — games which rely entirely on sprite collision for the greater part of game-play, notably *Exploding Fist*.

In such cases the Game Killer is totally inapplicable. For instance, if collisions are annulled in this classic, then presumably you and your opponent will just wander around the screen for the duration. If the game doesn't rely on sprite collision, there will be absolutely no effect. Either way, the cartridge is ineffective.

Survivors

This is by no means the end of the story. Take a game such as *Bounder* in which sprites account for both enemies (Exocets, darts, Lasers etc) and bonuses (Copyrights, Bees etc). In this particular game it became quite tedious and often infuriating to constantly switch between collisions on and off. When you reach for the 'little red button', you would meantime lose a life or two falling off platforms, bumping into walls etc. (The pause mode was not great help as running out of manouevring room was the usual problem).

Staying with *Bounder* a little longer, at times a sprite collision is necessary to activate teleports and the like, with a similar 'time-lapse' problem occuring in going for the switch.

There are obviously other situations in which the Game Killer is unusable; cartridge games, for instance (say no more!). But more likely are the new generation games which are not just down to 'being hit'. The sort of game we've seen developed over the past few months, of the very detailed, semi-strategic type: *Koronis Rift, Eidolon, Rock 'N' Wrestle, Mercenary,* are simply not prone to this type of 'cheating'. Particularly invulnerable are 3-D games.

In fact it is difficult to think of any 'new' game on which this device would be more marginally useful. To give it credit, it is better suited to the old Llamasoft programs such as *Revenge,* or maybe *Jet Set Willy* where once the sprites are disabled the game is a breeze.

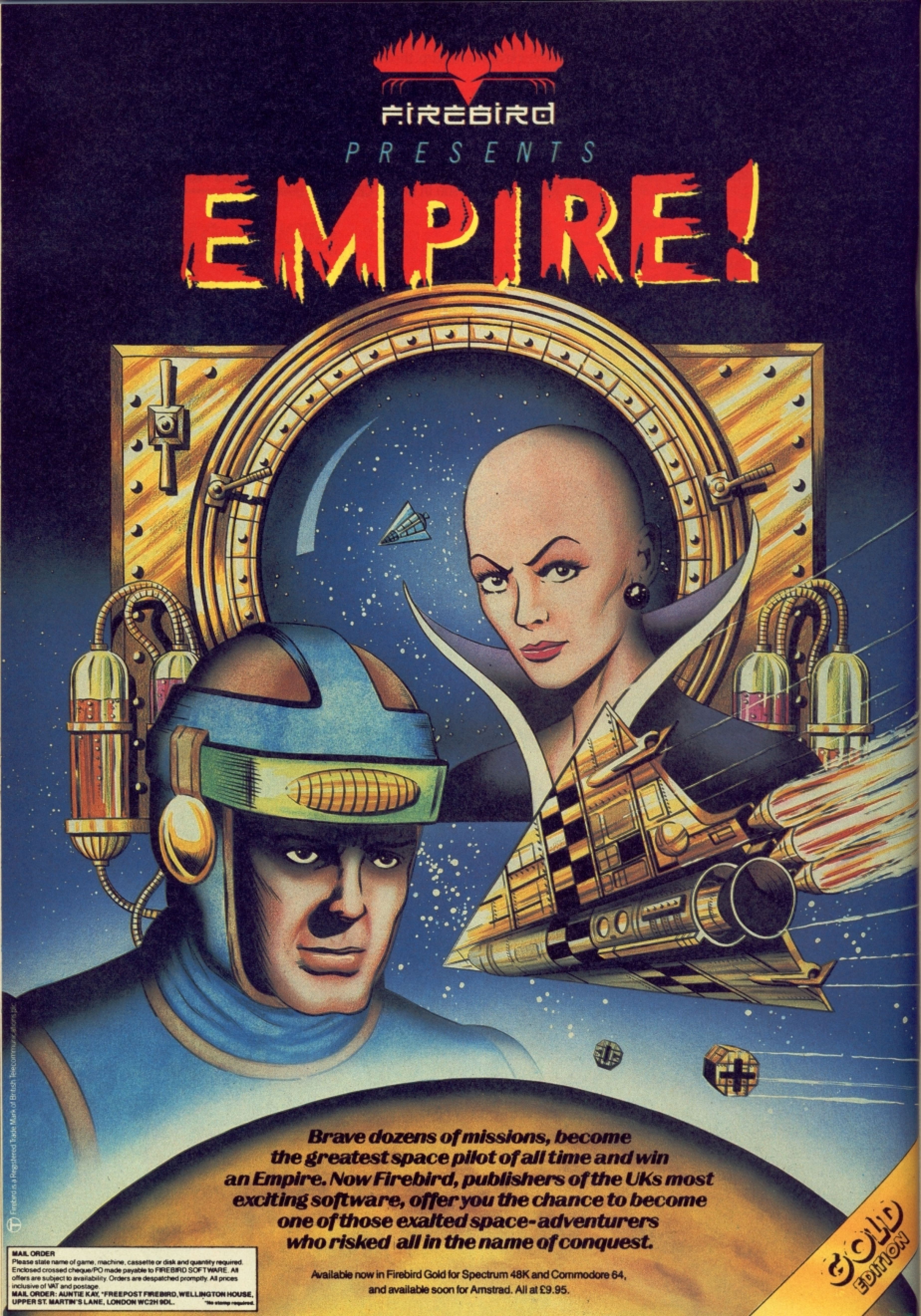
Games such as *Arabian Nights* become far easier, as does *Impossible Mission.* In fact, the general impression I was left with, was that far from being for arcade game bashing, this is aimed at your common-or-garden platform game.

Conclusions

So it seems that Game Killer is only truly useful in a small number of arcade games and a fair number of platform/exploration games. The problem is that although it is extremely useful as an application, it can only be applied to relatively few games. What I feel would be more useful is a utility to isolate sprites, perhaps giving complete control — movement, collision, visibility, maybe even extending its powers to other aspects of the game.

Perhaps I am judging this too harshly and there are people out there who want to crack games that this device will tackle, but somehow I think they'll find that to beat the new generation games they'll need the original method — bloodyminded determination, a lot of practice and even more patience. □

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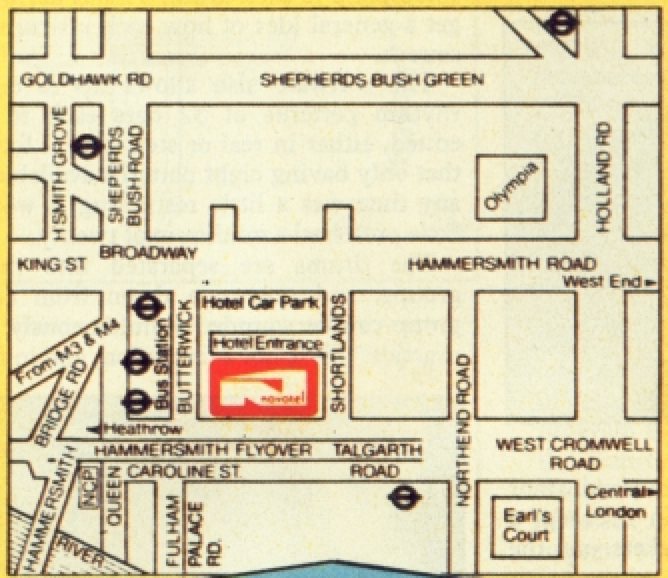
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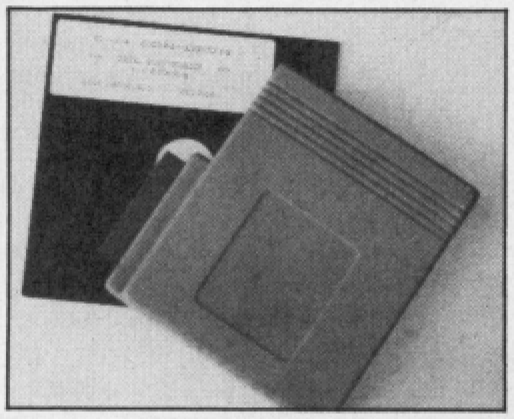
Odd couple

The most useful utilities for the 64 are those that make the most of its superb sound and graphics. We've rounded up two of the latest offerings in these areas: the Com-Drum, a drum machine and CAD-64 a drawing program from Orpheus.

THE DATEL COM-DRUM

The **Com-Drum** is the latest drum machine for the 64 that uses digitally sampled sound rather than synthesised sound. Simply put, it means you should get more realistic drum sounds. It costs just £29.95. That's much less than a commercial digital drum machine which can set you back up to £1,000.

The Com-Drum package consists of a cartridge and software on either tape or



disk. The cartridge is an oversized affair that looks to have nothing in it except a few chips and two jack sockets out the back.

These are for sound output to an amplifier and synchronisation to other electronic instruments. As you'll have guessed, you don't get sound output from a TV or monitor. There's a consolation in all this: you really need an amplifier as the sound quality is very good, with hardly any background noise.

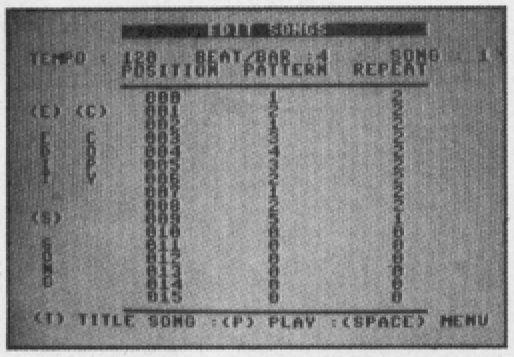
The Software

The editing software is menu driven and generally easy to use. Once this is up and running, you must then load one of the three drumkits provided. Each drumkit contains eight different percussion sounds ranging from bass drums to tom-toms and hand claps. Datel are planning to launch further 'drumkits' in the near future for use with the Com-Drum.

Once a drumkit is loaded you are ready to start drumming. One option on the main menu will allow you to play the drums 'live' by pressing keys 1 to 8 to correspond to each drum. This is useful to get a general idea of how each instrument sounds.

The software also allows up to eight rhythm patterns of 32 bars each to be edited, either in real or step time. I found that only having eight patterns available at any time was a little restricting. I would have preferred a minimum of twenty.

The drums are separated into three groups, and only one drum from each group can be sounded simultaneously. In practice, this is not a limitation, and in fact



mimics the way real drummers would play their kit. So, for instance, a bass drum, snare drum and hi-hat can all be sounded on the same beat, but a snare drum, hi-tom and lo-tom cannot.

Song Editor

Once you're satisfied with the rhythm patterns you can string them together using the *song editor* option, and up to eight songs can be held in memory at once.

A song is created by combining up to sixteen phrases, each of which are made up of a rhythm pattern and the number of times to repeat it. This gives ample playing time for the average song.

Once you have completed a song you can give it a title, which also copies it to the existing library of eight songs. These can then be saved to disk or tape

Unfortunately, I found that the eight songs that come with the software were dreadfully boring, and did not really reflect what could be achieved with a bit more effort.

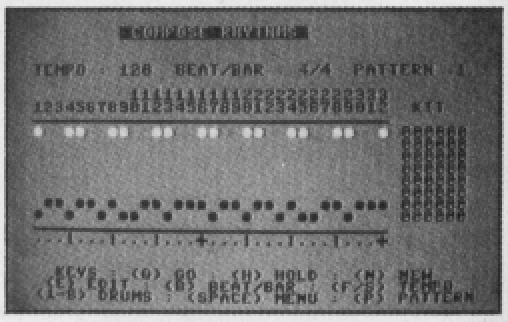
Conclusions

Overall, the Com-drum performed well, but I felt that a few small changes to the software would improve its performance. In particular, I would prefer the maximum tempo to be much faster, as this would make possible quick fill-ins or snare drum rolls at the end of a pattern (listen to any Howard Jones record to hear how effective this can be).

Still, at £30 Com-Drum is a bargain, and very handy for the solo musician who likes to practice with some form of backing.

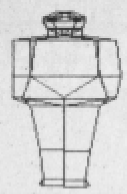
Jeremy Hall

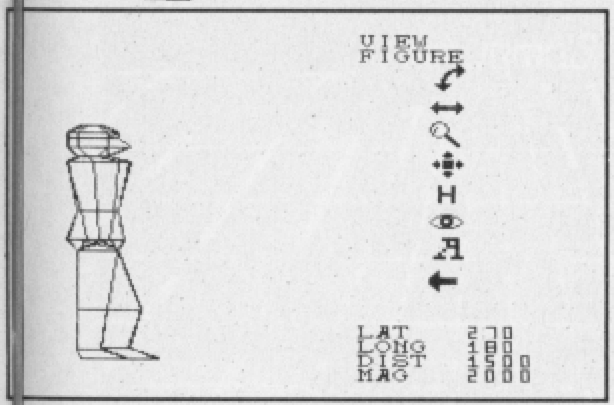
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ORPHEUS CAD 64

At first sight, **CAD 64** seems almost too good to be true. A package that offers 3-D perspective (sometimes called $2\frac{1}{2}$-D)





drawings with hidden line removal plus animation might be expected to cost a lot of money.

CAD 64 offers all these for only £18.95 (£14.95 on cassette), cheaper than most other 2-D drawing packages. Included in the price is the 40 page manual and a number of examples on the disk to give you an idea of the capabilities.

Wealth of Features

Despite using several other CAD packages on the 64, I was initially overwhelmed by the apparent scope of this program. No longer was it a case of drawing a circle here, a rectangle there, plus a bit of free-hand drawing; suddenly there were things called 'slices', viewing distances, viewing angles, magnification factors and such like.

My initial efforts, sticking to something simple like a cube or a pyramid were reasonably successful. I say 'reasonably' because they didn't always turn out the way the manual suggested, but more of that later. Since it was obviously going to take a while to become expert at creating drawings I tried working with some of the examples on the disk.

You'll see from the drawings of the shuttle that the ability to move the object in space (no pun intended) by altering the latitude and longitude viewing co-ordinates is a very powerful feature. Having drawn an object you can view it at virtually any angle you wish.

The 'menu' at the side of the drawings is what you get on the screen in 'viewing' mode; the whole program is driven by similar menus with the options being selected by a moving icon (a pointing finger).

The animate facility allows you to change all the viewing parameters in variable steps over a selected number of changes; you can even vary the time interval between steps.

Ease of use

The program can be controlled using a joystick or keyboard, but the method is identical for both. Since you can only get a few options on each menu at a time, you keep popping back and forth between different modes, which I found a little confusing at first.

Much more serious than this, is that the program is very unforgiving of errors. Sometimes I selected the wrong menu option by mistake and couldn't get out of it — hitting 'RESTORE' should normally get you back to the command menu.

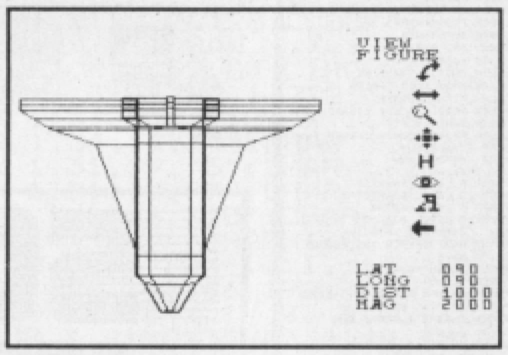
Mistakes while drawing are also difficult to remedy since there is no 'undo' function; you have to select an 'erase' brush and then repeat the error!

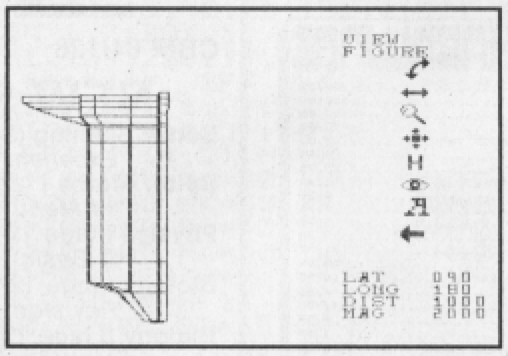
On the plus side, there are several features which save you a lot of work. By specifying the start point you can then draw a figure merely by telling the program how many sides it has. You can then convert this to a 3-D object by specifying the 'depth' of the object, thus guaranteeing the object is symmetrical.

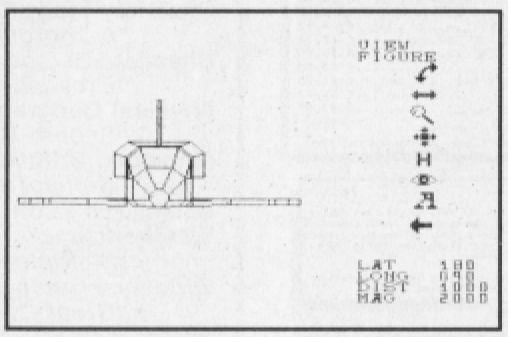
Load and Save

Drawings can be loaded and saved to disk either as simple objects or as complete screens (eg with associated text etc). Objects can then be recalled for use in other programs; a nice touch.

Unfortunately that is the only good thing about the disk access routines. There is no facility to access the directory, there is no check on the disk error channel and the real killer is that when you type in a file name, *you cannot edit any mistakes*, since the DEL key is disabled. Not only that, but the keyboard scan is so slow that if you are a fast typist the program only registers every other character you type.

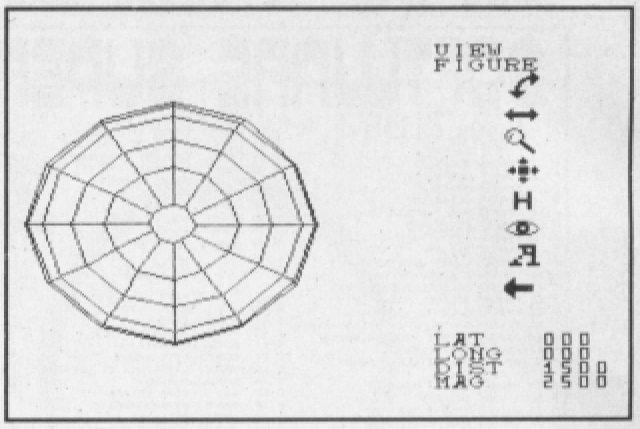






Print it out

You can obtain either a screen dump, which includes the menu and settings, or an enlarged 'picture only'. The problem with the latter is that the drawing is expanded in the horizontal plane



compared to the screen; not much use if you want scale drawings.

The other limitation is that the program will only work with an Epson printer attached *to User-port*. The suppliers say you can contact them for advice if you have a different combination, but you will have to wait for the new version if you have a Commodore printer.

The Manual

A program as complex as this must have a good manual. This one tries hard, but falls at too many fences. There are several errors and it leaves out certain vital instructions which makes it difficult for the beginner. Once you know your way round the program then the manual is reasonable; giving you summaries of the menus, a glossary of terms and a reasonable contents page.

There's a number of screen dumps in the manual, but despite following the instructions I didn't always get the same results, which made me wonder whether they had left out some of the instructions.

Conclusions

While the features are second to none when compared to other CAD packages for the 64, I found it such a difficult program to use that I would have to want the features very badly indeed to put up with it.

As for the file access mode, that needs urgent revision before I could recommend this program to anyone. The delete key must be re-enabled and the keyscan routine speeded up, as well as providing proper disk error handling.

With so much good software available for the 64, software houses can no longer get away with this casual approach towards user-friendliness. £19 may not seem a lot for what you are getting, but I'd rather pay £25 and get a program which pays attention to such detail.

Chris Durham

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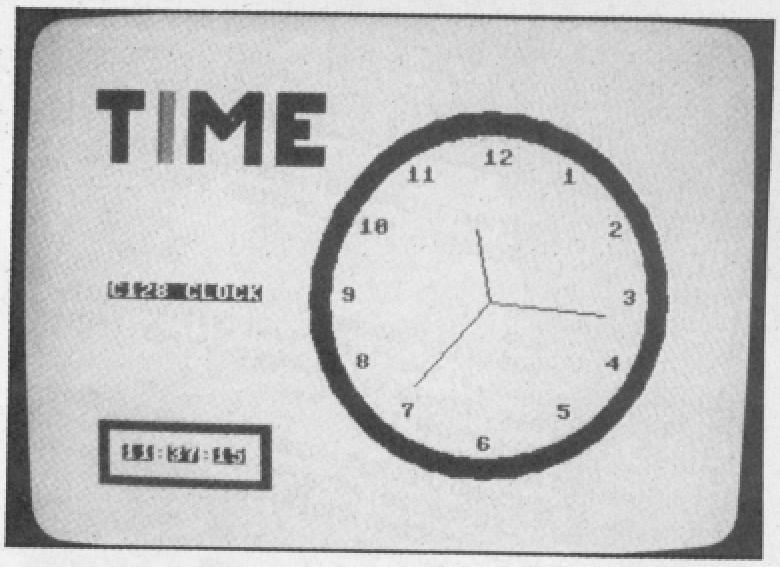
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DOUBLE-TIME CLOCK



by David Bales

Just what you've been waiting for (you lucky 128 owners), our first type-in program exclusively for the new C-128. And what do you get? Well, you get both an analogue (moving hands) and a digital clock display. Nice graphics, ticking sound and good use of the 128's Basic make this a nifty little piece of programming.

for the Commodore 128

```
10 REM     ********************
15 REM     *   COMMODORE 128  *
20 REM     *      CLOCK       *
25 REM     *       BY         *
30 REM     *   DAVID BALES    *
35 REM     ********************
40 COLOR 0,1:COLOR 4,1
45 INPUT"START TIME 24 HRS CLOCK HHMMSS";TI$
50 REM *******  DRAW CLOCK  *******
55 GRAPHIC CLR:COLOR 0,2:COLOR 4,2:COLOR 1,1:GRAPHIC1,1
60 CHAR 1,2,12,"C128 CLOCK",1
65 X=212:Y=102:DRAW 1,X,Y
70 CIRCLE1,X,Y,92,87:CIRCLE1,X,Y,82,77
75 COLOR 1,3:PAINT 1,212,18,1:COLOR1,1
80 CHAR 1,31,5,"1":CHAR 1,34,8,"2":CHAR 1,35,12,"3"
85 CHAR 1,34,16,"4":CHAR 1,31,19,"5":CHAR 1,26,21,"6"
90 CHAR 1,31,19,"5":CHAR 1,26,21,"6"
95 CHAR 1,21,19,"7":CHAR 1,18,16,"8":CHAR 1,17,12,"9"
100 CHAR 1,18,8,"10":CHAR 1,21,5,"11":CHAR 1,26,4,"12"
105 REM *******  GRAPHICS  *******
110 COLOR 1,4: BOX 1,11,164,101,196
115 BOX 1,16,168,96,192:PAINT1,13,170,1
120 COLOR 1,5:BOX 1, 8, 8,32,16,,1:BOX1,16,16,24,40,,1
125 COLOR 1,8:BOX 1,40,8,48,40,,1
130 COLOR 1,6:BOX 1,56, 8,64, 40,,1:BOX 1,58,15,78,23,45,1
135 BOX 1,68,15,90,23,135,1:BOX 1,85,8,93,40,,1
140 COLOR 1,7:BOX 1, 101,8,109, 40,,1:BOX1,109,8,125,16,,1
145 BOX 1,109,20,117,28,,1:BOX 1,109, 32,125, 40,,1
150 REM *******  SET CLOCK  *******
155 S$=RIGHT$(TI$,2):S=VAL(S$)
160 M$=MID$(TI$,3,2):M=VAL(M$)
165 H$=LEFT$(TI$,2):H=VAL(H$)
170 IF M>10 AND M<=20 THEN H=H+0.2
175 IF M>20 AND M<=30 THEN H=H+0.4
180 IF M>30 AND M<=40 THEN H=H+0.6
185 IF M>40 AND M<=50 THEN H=H+0.8
190 IF M>50 THEN H=H+1
195 IFH>12THENH=H-12
200 R1=60:R2=55:R3=35
205 CIRCLE 1,X,Y,0,R1,270,0,(6*S),120
210 CIRCLE 1,X,Y,0,R2,270,0,(6*M),120
215 CIRCLE 1,X,Y,0,R3,270,0,(30*H),120
220 REM *******  UPDATE CLOCK  *******
225 IF T$=TI$THEN210
230 T$=TI$
235 CHAR 1,3,22,H$,1:CHAR 1,5,22,":",0
240 CHAR 1,6,22,M$,1:CHAR 1,8,22,":",0:CHAR 1,9,22,S$,1
245 CIRCLE 0,X,Y,0,R1,270,0,(6*S),120
250 S$=RIGHT$(TI$,2):S=VAL(S$)
255 VOL 5: SOUND 1,4096,5
260 CIRCLE 1,X,Y,0,R1,270,0,(6*S),120
265 IF S<>0THEN225
270 CIRCLE 0,X,Y,0,R2,270,0,(6*M),120
275 M$=MID$(TI$,3,2):M=VAL(M$)
280 CIRCLE 1,X,Y,0,R2,270,0,(6*M),120
285 CIRCLE 0,X,Y,0,R3,270,0,(30*H),120
290 H$=LEFT$(TI$,2):H=VAL(H$)
295 IF M>10 AND M<=20 THEN H=H+0.2
300 IF M>20 AND M<=30 THEN H=H+0.4
305 IF M>30 AND M<=40 THEN H=H+0.6
310 IF M>40 AND M<=50 THEN H=H+0.8
315 IF M>50 THEN H=H+1
320 IFH>12THENH=H-12
325 CIRCLE 1,X,Y,0,R3,270,0,(30*H),120
330 GOTO225
```

For the HUNCHB

This has got to be one of our best type-ins yet, a superb cutdown version of the great arcade classic. You remember, as Quasimodo you have to get through no less than seven screens of deadly danger to save (you guessed it) the fair Esmeralda. Joystick control and super graphics make this a game not to be missed.

```
5 PRINT"[CLS][WHT]"CHR$(8):POKE53280,0:POKE53281,0:POKE53269,0
10 PRINT"[6SPC]DATA NOW LOADING PLEASE WAIT":GOTO9000
12 HI=7580
15 GOSUB2000
20 GOSUB1000
25 GOSUB4000:TI$="000000"
30 X=0:POKEV,X:Y=123:POKEV+1,Y:POKEV+21,SP:FORX=1TO15:POKE2040,254:POKEV,X
35 POKE2040,255:NEXTX:Z=PEEK(V+30):Z=PEEK(V+31)
100 REM *** MAIN LOOP ***
102 IFJTHEN120
105 IFX>15AND(PEEK(56320)AND4)=0THENX=X-4
110 IF(PEEK(56320)AND8)=0THENX=X+4
115 IF(PEEK(56320)AND16)=0THENK=PEEK(56320):J=1:POKE2040,255:GOSUB705
120 IFX>250THEN750
125 POKEV,X:POKEV+1,Y
130 IFJTHENGOSUB705:GOTO180
160 P=PEEK(56320):IFJ=0AND(PAND4)=4AND(PAND8)=8THENPOKE2040,254:GOTO180
165 IFA=1THENA=2:POKE2040,255:GOTO180
170 POKE2040,254:A=1
180 ONLGOSUB300,310,320,330,340,350,360
185 IFHTHEN800
200 GOTO102
300 GOSUB405:RETURN
310 GOSUB505:RETURN
320 GOSUB455:RETURN
330 GOSUB555:GOSUB405:RETURN
340 GOSUB405:GOSUB455:RETURN
350 GOSUB455:GOSUB555:RETURN
360 GOSUB605:GOSUB405:GOSUB455:RETURN
400 REM *** CONTROL SUBROUTINES ***
405 IFBTHEN420
410 B=1:C=255:POKEV+2,C:POKEV+3,122:GOSUB855:POKEV+21,SP+2
420 C=C-7:IFC<0THENPOKEV+21,SP:B=0:C=255:POKEV+2,C:RETURN
425 POKEV+2,C:IFPEEK(V+30)=3THENH=1:C=255:POKEV+21,SP
430 RETURN
455 PRINT"[HOM][6CD]"SPC(18)D$(D):D=D+DO:IFD=6ORD=0THENDO=-DO
460 IFPEEK(V+31)=1THENH=1
470 RETURN
505 IFJTHENRETURN
510 IF(X>87ANDX<106)OR(X>144ANDX<161)OR(X>196ANDX<219)THENH=1
515 RETURN
555 IFJTHENRETURN
560 IF(X>97ANDX<124)OR(X>170ANDX<196)THENH=1
565 RETURN
605 IFJTHENRETURN
610 IF(X>87ANDX<106)THENH=1
615 RETURN
705 Y=Y-U:IFY<111THENU=-U
710 IFY>123THENY=123:J=0:U=3:RETURN
715 IFX>15AND(KAND4)=0THENX=X-2.5:RETURN
720 IF(KAND8)=0THENX=X+2.5
725 RETURN
750 REM *** COMPLETE LEVEL ***
752 PO=INT(1000-(TI/2)):IFL=7THEN975
755 POKEV+21,SP
760 FORI=1TO4:POKE2040,254:FORJ=123TO113STEP-1:POKE2040,255:POKEV,255
765 POKEV+1,J:NEXTJ:GOSUB860:FORJ=113TO123:POKEV,255:POKEV+1,J:NEXTJ,I:X=X+255
```

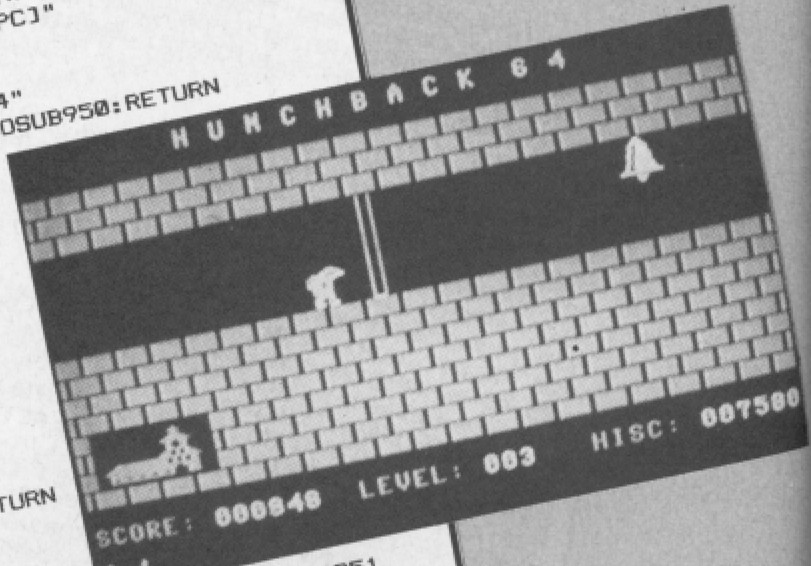
Commodore 64/128

```
770 POKEV+16,5:FORI=1TO75:POKEV,I:POKEV+1,123:POKE2040,255:POKE2040,254:NEXTI
772 POKEV+21,0:POKEV+16,4
780 PRINT"[CLS]":LE=LE+1:L=L+1:IFL>7THENL=1
785 J=0:IFPO<0THENPO=0
790 SC=SC+100+PO:IFSC/1000=(INT(SC/1000))THENLI=LI+1:GOSUB950
795 FORI=1TO500:NEXT:GOTO25
800 REM *** DEATH ROUTINE ***
805 SO=255:POKEV+21,SP:POKE2040,255
810 POKEV+1,Y:Y=Y+3:IFY>255THEN825
815 POKES+4,32:POKES+5,10:POKES+6,1:POKES+4,33:SO=SO-5:POKES+1,SO:POKES,SO
820 GOTO810
825 LI=LI-1:IFLI<0THENPOKEV+21,12:GOTO835
830 H=0:J=0:GOSUB950:GOTO30
835 G$="REVO[2SPC]EMAG":FORI=1TO10
840 FORJ=1TO(24-I):PRINT"[HOM][WHT][8CD]"TAB(J)" "MID$(G$,I,1);:NEXTJ,I
845 FORI=1TO2000:NEXTI:POKEV+21,0:PRINT"[CLS]":FORI=1TO500:NEXTI
847 IFSC>HITHENHI=SC
849 GOTO15
850 REM *** SOUND ***
855 POKES+4,128:POKES+5,12:POKES+6,10:POKES+4,129:POKES+1,15:POKES,200:RETURN
860 POKES+4,16:POKES+5,12:POKES+6,10:POKES+4,17:POKES+1,15:POKES,200:RETURN
900 REM *** PRINT SCORE ETC ***
905 PRINT"[HOM][GRN][20CD]";
910 A$=MID$(STR$(SC),2,LEN(STR$(SC))):SC$=LEFT$("000000",7-LEN(STR$(SC)))
915 SC$=SC$+A$:PRINTSPC(7);SC$
920 PRINT"[HOM][20CD]";
925 A$=MID$(STR$(LE),2,LEN(STR$(LE))):LE$=LEFT$("000",4-LEN(STR$(LE)))
930 LE$=LE$+A$:PRINTSPC(22);LE$
935 PRINT"[HOM][20CD]";
940 A$=MID$(STR$(HI),2,LEN(STR$(HI))):HI$=LEFT$("000000",7-LEN(STR$(HI)))
945 HI$=HI$+A$:PRINTSPC(34);HI$:RETURN
950 REM *** LIVES ***
955 LI$="[G>E] [G>E] [G>E] [G>E] [G>E] [G>E]"
960 PRINT"[HOM][GRN][22CD]"LEFT$(LI$,LI*2)"[14SPC]":RETURN
975 POKEV+21,SP:POKEV+1,123:FORI=1TO5:FORX=20TO30STEP.5:POKEV+8,X:NEXTX
980 GOSUB860:FORX=30TO20STEP-.5:POKEV+8,X:NEXTX:GOSUB860:NEXTI:SC=SC+2000
985 POKEV+21,0:GOTO780
1000 REM *** TITLE ***
1010 TS=1:GOSUB4000:POKEV+21,12:PRINT"[HOM]"TAB(9)"[CD][WHT]H U N C H B A C K[2S
PC]6 4"
1015 PRINT"[HOM][7CD]"TAB(9)"[WHT]WRITTEN BY SANDY MUNRO"
1020 PRINT"[CD][3SPC][G>C] COPYRIGHT A.R.M. SOFTWARE 1986 [G>C]":GOSUB900
1040 IF(PEEK(56320)AND16)=0THENPOKEV+21,0:PRINT"[CLS]":FORI=1TO500:NEXTI:RETURN
1045 GOTO1040
2000 REM *** VARIABLES ***
2005 V=53248:X=0:Y=123:POKEV,X:POKEV+1,Y:L=1:LE=1:SC=0:LI=5:A=1:DO=1:J=0:U=3
2006 B=0:H=0:C=255:SP=13
2020 P$="[4SPC][CD][4CL][4SPC][CD][4CL][4SPC][2CU]"
2025 D$(1)="[G>G][CD][CL] [CD][CL] [CD][CL] ":D$(2)="[G>F][CD][CL][G>G]
[CD][CL] [CD][CL] ":D$(3)="[G>F][CD][CL][G>F][CD][CL][G>G][CD][CL] [CD]
[CL] "
2030 D$(4)="[G>F][CD][CL][G>F][CD][CL][G>F][CD][CL][G>G][CD][CL] ":D$(5)="[G>F][
CD][CL][G>F][CD][CL][G>F][CD][CL][G>G]"
2035 H$="[RED][9SPC]H U N C H B A C K[3SPC]64"
2050 S=54272:FORI=STOS+23:POKEI,0:NEXT:POKES+24,15:RETURN
```

Munro

BACK

HUNCHBACK




```
4000 REM *** DRAW SCREEN ***
4005 W$="[RED][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][
G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][
G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B]"
4010 W1$="[RED][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B]
[G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B]
[G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A][G>B][G>A]"
4020 PRINT"[CLS][3CD]"W$;W1$;W$"[5CD]";W$;W1$;W$;W1$;W$;W1$
4025 PRINT"[HOM][15CD][CR][7SPC][CD][7CL][7SPC][CD][7CL][7SPC]"
4030 PRINT"[CD]SCORE:[9SPC]LEVEL:[7SPC]HISC:"
4050 IFTS=1THENTS=0:RETURN
4055 PRINT"[HOM]"TAB(9)"[CD][GRN]H U N C H B A C K[2SPC]6 4"
4100 ONLGOSUB4200,4220,4240,4260,4280,4300,4320:GOSUB900:GOSUB950:RETURN
4200 REM *** LEVEL 1 ***
4205 SP=13:RETURN
4220 REM *** LEVEL 2 ***
4225 PRINT"[HOM][11CD]"SPC(10)P$SPC(3)P$SPC(3)P$:RETURN
4240 REM *** LEVEL 3 ***
4245 RETURN
4260 REM *** LEVEL 4 ***
4265 PRINT"[HOM][11CD]"SPC(12)P$SPC(5)P$:RETURN
4280 REM *** LEVEL 5 ***
4285 RETURN
4300 REM *** LEVEL 6 ***
4305 PRINT"[HOM][11CD]"SPC(12)P$SPC(5)P$:RETURN
4320 REM *** LEVEL 7 ***
4325 PRINT"[HOM][11CD]"SPC(10)P$:POKEV+16,20:SP=29:RETURN
4400 REM *** DRAW PITS ***
5000 END
5100 IFPEEK(V+31)<>1THENH=1
9000 REM *** DATA ***
9005 POKE52,48:POKE56,48:CLR:POKE56334,PEEK(56334)AND254:POKE1,PEEK(1)AND251
9010 FORI=0TO511:POKE12288+I,PEEK(I+53248):NEXT:POKE1,PEEK(1)OR4
9015 POKE56334,PEEK(56334)OR1
9020 POKE53272,(PEEK(53272)AND240)+12
9025 FORI=0TO55:READQ:POKE12808+I,Q:NEXT
9050 FORI=255TO250STEP-1:FORJ=0TO62:READQ:POKEI*64+J,Q:NEXTJ,I
9055 V=53248:POKEV+4,25:POKEV+5,97:POKEV+16,20:POKEV+40,5:POKEV+41,15
9060 POKEV+42,2:POKEV+43,7:POKEV+6,36:POKEV+7,172:POKEV+8,20:POKEV+9,117
9065 POKEV+23,0:POKEV+29,9:POKE2040,255:POKE2041,253:POKE2042,252:POKE2043,251
9070 POKE2044,250
9080 GOTO12
9100 REM *** DATA ***
9105 DATA255,255,255,255,255,255,255,0
9110 DATA231,231,231,231,231,231,231,0
9115 DATA60,66,153,161,161,153,66,60
9120 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
9125 DATA24,28,56,120,56,16,40,72
9130 DATA66,66,66,66,66,66,66,66
9135 DATA66,66,66,66,66,66,66,126
9500 REM *** SPRITE DATA ***
9505 DATA0,12,0,0,18,0,0,19,0,0,60,0,0,116,0,0,108,0,0,44,0,0,52,0,0,60,0,0,28
9510 DATA0,0,20,0,0,38,0,0,66,0,0,67,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
9515 DATA0,0
9520 DATA0,6,0,0,9,0,0,57,128,0,126,0,0,116,0,0,116,0,0,52,0,0,52,0,0,60,0,0,28
9525 DATA0,0,20,0,0,36,0,0,36,0,0,54,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
9530 DATA0
9535 DATA0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,3,0,30,15,0,60,63,255
9540 DATA248,15,0,60,3,0,30,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
9550 DATA0,0,0,56,0,0,124,0,0,222,0,1,159,0,1,191,0,1,191,0,3,63,128,3,127
9555 DATA128,3,127,128,3,127,128,6,127,192,6,255,192,12,63,224,63,255,248,0,0
9560 DATA0,0,124;0,0,56,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0,0
9570 DATA0,0,64,0,0,224,0,0,64,0,0,224,0,1,240,0,3,248,0,1,176,0,1,16,0,1,176
9575 DATA0,1,240,0,3,88,0,7,92,31,255,254,63,254,172,127,254,172,255,255,252
9580 DATA127,255,188,127,255,28,91,109,28,127,255,28,0,0,0
9590 DATA0,4,0,0,10,0,0,18,0,0,57,0,0,56,0,0,40,0,0,124,0,0,254,0,1,199,0,25
9595 DATA199,48,9,199,32,12,130,96,7,108,192,3,147,128,0,130,0,0,68,0,0,108,0,0
9600 DATA214,0,0,170,0,1,17,0,1,255,0

READY.
```

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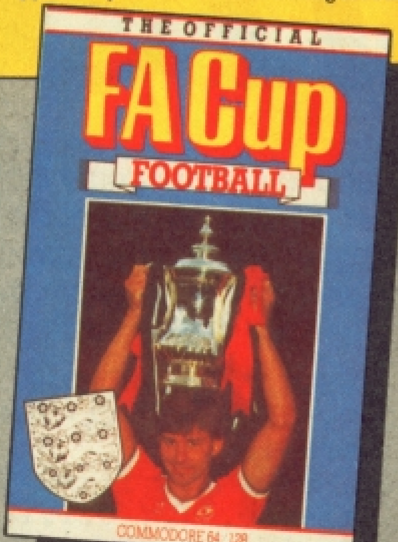


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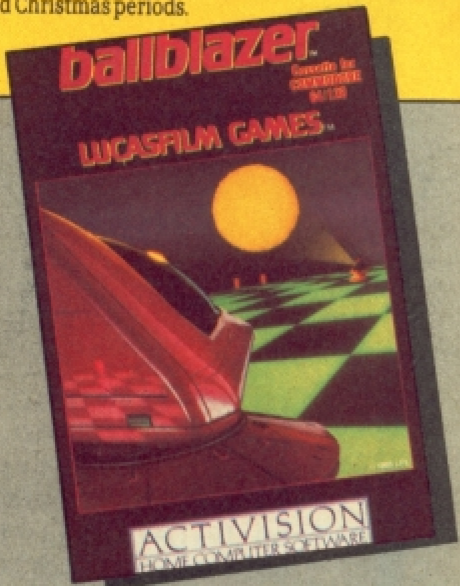
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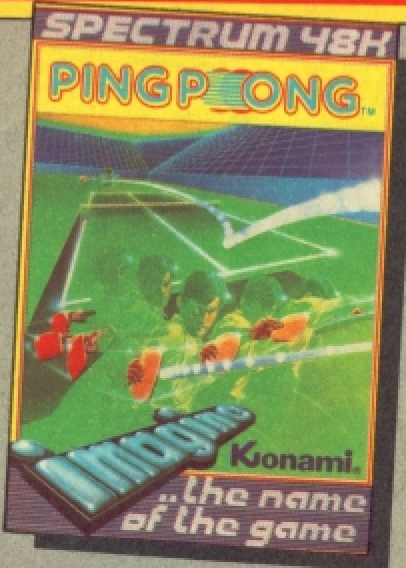
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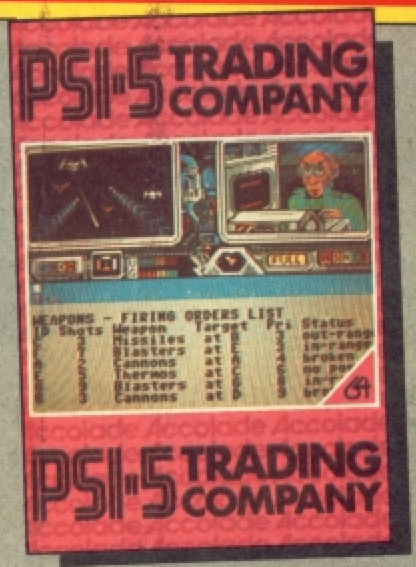
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CU1

MISSILE

for the Commodore 16 and Plus/4

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EASY ENTER

```
10 REM***MISSILE BY T H JAMES.3/1/86FORTHEC16***
20 VOL8:COLOR0,14,6:COLOR4,6:SC=3072:CL=2048
30 DIMDR%(7,1):DIMMC%(7):EX=-1:LV=1
40 FORI=0TO7:READDR%(I,0):READDR%(I,1):NEXT:FORI=0TO7:READMC%(I):NEXT
50 DATA1,0,1,-1,0,-1,-1,-1,-1,0,-1,1;0,1,1,1,62,78,30,77,60,78,33,77
60 PRINT"[CLS][RED][3CD]"
70 PRINT"[13SPC]MISSILE."
80 PRINT"[BLK][2CD][13SPC]CONTROLS"
90 PRINT"[L BLU][2CD][7SPC]<[3SPC]TURN MISSILE LEFT"
100 PRINT"[CD][7SPC]>[3SPC]TURN MISSILE RIGHT"
110 PRINT"[CD][7SPC]SPACEBAR FIRES MISSILE"
120 PRINT"[2CD][10SPC]RETURN TO START"
130 GETA$:IFA$=""THEN130
140 IFASC(A$)<>13THEN130
150 PRINT"[CLS][BLU][16SPC]MISSILE."
160 PRINT"[BLK][CTRL@][16SPC][8G<+]"
170 GOSUB650:K=0:N=LV*5:PC=0
180 FORI=0TO39:POKE4032+I,104:POKE3008+I,57:NEXT
190 POKE4050,85:POKE4051,66:POKE4052,73
200 MX=2:MY=22:D=2:F$=""
210 GETA$:TN=TN+1
220 IFA$<>" "THEN260
230 SOUND3,750,5:SOUND3,765,5:SOUND3,780,5:SOUND3,795,10
240 PT=PT-1:PC=PC-1:GOSUB650
250 POKESC+40*MY+MX,32:MY=22:MX=19:D=2:POKESC+40*MY+MX,MC%(D):F$="F"
260 IFF$=""THEN360
270 POKESC+40*MY+MX,32:POKECL+40*MY+MX,0
280 MX=MX+DR%(D,0):MY=MY+DR%(D,1)
290 IFMX<0ORMX>39ORMY<2ORMY>23THEN200
300 TG=PEEK(SC+40*MY+MX)
310 IFTG<>32THENGOSUB540:GOTO210
320 POKESC+40*MY+MX,MC%(D):POKECL+40*MY+MX,0
330 IFA$=","THEND=D+1:IFD>7THEND=0
340 IFA$="."THEND=D-1:IFD<0THEND=7
350 SOUND1,1000-ABS(EX-MX)-ABS(EY-MY),3
360 IFTN<6-LVTHEN210
370 TN=0:IFEX>=0ANDEX<=39THEN410
380 FORI=1TO10:SOUND2,900-5*I,4:FORJ=1TO4:NEXTJ:NEXTI
390 EX=0:ED=1:IFRND(0)>.5THENEX=39:ED=5
400 EY=INT(RND(0)*8+RND(0)*8+2)
410 POKESC+40*EY+EX,32
420 IFEY+DR%(ED,1)<3THENEY=3:ED=INT(RND(0)*5+4):GOTO490
430 IFEY+DR%(ED,1)>23THENEY=23:ED=INT(RND(0)*5):GOTO510
440 EX=EX+DR%(ED,0):EY=EY+DR%(ED,1)
450 ED=ED+INT(RND(0)*3)-1
460 IFEX<0THENEX=1:ED=INT(RND(0)*4+6)
470 IFEX>39THENEX=38:ED=INT(RND(0)*5+2)
480 IFED<0THENED=ED+7
490 IFED>7THENED=ED-7
```

E MISSILE

by
T H James

```
500 EG=PEEK(SC+40*EY+EX)
510 POKESC+40*EY+EX,65:POKECL+40*EY+EX,49
520 IFEG<>32THENGOSUB540
530 GOTO210
540 POKESC+40*MY+MX,42:PT=PT+5*LV+1:PC=PC+5*LV+1
550 FORI=1TO25:SOUND3,1000-5*I,5:NEXT
560 FORI=60TO127:POKECL+40*MY+MX,I:NEXT
570 F$="":POKESC+40*MY+MX.32:X=19:MY=22:EX=-1:K=K+1
580 IFK<>NTHEN650
590 FORI=1TO20+2*LV:SOUND1,600+I*5.5:SOUND2,900-4*I,5:FORJ=1TO5:NEXTJ:NEXTI
600 PRINT"[BLK][5CD][4CR]LEVEL ";LV;" COMPLETED."
610 PRINT"[CD][4SPC]TOUGHNESS = ";100*PC/(N*5*LV);"%"
620 PRINT"[2CD][YEL][4SPC]RETURN TO CONTINUE"
630 LV=LV+1:IFLV>5THENLV=5
640 PRINT"[HOM][CD][2SPC][RED]SCORE [YEL]";PT:GOTO130
650 PRINT"[HOM][CD][2SPC][RED]SCORE [YEL][6SPC][6CL]";PT:RETURN
```

HOW TO USE EASY ENTER

EASY ENTER

COLOUR CODES

[BLK] — press CTRL and 1
[WHT] — press CTRL and 2
[RED] — press CTRL and 3
[CYN] — press CTRL and 4
[PUR] — press CTRL and 5
[GRN] — press CTRL and 6
[BLU] — press CTRL and 7
[YEL] — press CTRL and 8

[ORG] — press CBM key and 1
[BRN] — press CBM key and 2
[L RED] — press CBM key and 3
[GR1] — press CBM key and 4
[GR2] — press CBM key and 5
[L GRN] — press CBM key and 6
[L BLU] — press CBM key and 7
[GR3] — press CBM key and 8

C16 & Plus/4 only

[CTRL @] — press CTRL and flash on
[CTRL G] — press CTRL and flash off

COMMODORE GRAPHIC CHARACTERS

PRINT WHITE
CURSOR DOWN
REVERSE FIELD ON
HOME
PRINT RED
CURSOR RIGHT
PRINT GREEN
PRINT BLUE
FUNCTION KEY F1
FUNCTION KEY F3
FUNCTION KEY F5
FUNCTION KEY F7
FUNCTION KEY F2
FUNCTION KEY F4
FUNCTION KEY F6
FUNCTION KEY F8
PRINT BLACK
CURSOR UP
REVERSE FIELD OFF
CLEAR
INSERT
PRINT PURPLE
CURSOR LEFT
PRINT YELLOW
PRINT CYAN

OTHER CODES

[CU] — press 'cursor up' key
[CD] — press 'cursor down' key
[CL] — press 'cursor left' key
[CR] — press 'cursor right' key
[HOM] — press HOME key
[CLS] — press CLEAR key
[DEF] — press INST key (insert)
[REV] — press RVS ON key (CTRL and 9)
[OFF] — press RVS OFF key (CTRL and 0)
[SPC] — press spacebar
[G<key] — press CBM key with specified key
[G>key] — press SHIFT key with specified key

EXAMPLES:

[3SPC] — press spacebar three times
[5CD] — press 'cursor down' key five times
[G>F] — press SHIFT key with 'F'

Computer magic

Resident magician Phil Cornes has been ploughing through an ever-increasing mailbag of your Magic Tips for the 64, and he's included some in this month's magical offering.

Don't be left out, if you've got a brilliant little trick up your sleeve that makes your 64 do weird and wonderful things, send it to us and win youself a Commodore User T-shirt: Computer Magic, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Room To Spare

The 64 has no facility to let you determine the amount of free memory space that remains for Basic programs and data. So, the following program loads a machine code-routine into memory at location 49152 that will provide just this facility.

To use the routine, you just type the command line: **SYS 49152**. This will call the machine code routine which calculates the free space remaining for Basic programs and prints out the result on the next line as a decimal number.

The routine as given here loads and executes at address 49152 as set up in line 10. But the routine itself is completely relocatable so that it can operate at any convenient place in memory. All you need to do is to change line 10 to the following:

10 FOR C=ADDR TO ADDR+12

Where ADDR is the new load and executive address for the routine.

```
10 FOR C=49152 TO 49164
20 READ B : POKE C,B : NEXT C
30 DATA 56,165,55,229,45,170,165
40 DATA 56,229,46,76,205,189
```

Display FREE memory size.

Easy Reset

From time to time, you may have several important machine-code subroutines in memory that you want to keep in memory, while at the same time NEWing a Basic program and generally resetting the machine to its power-on state.

This can all be achieved by fitting a reset switch as outlined in part 1 of *Magic*. However, if you're completely useless with a soldering iron, then here is a simple command to achieve the same effect:

SYS 64738

This preserves your machine code but calls the 64's power on reset routine without switching off the power. Simple, really.

Jimmy Webb,
Swansea

Chopper SID

The SID chip is quite a complex device to program to make it produce reasonable sounds. However, I discovered that with the following simple program the C64 could be made to produce the sound of a helicopter, just by repeatedly changing the master volume control byte.

Nik Kimberley
Wolverhampton

```
10 REM HELICOPTER SOUND FX
20 REM BY N.K. JAN 86
30 POKE 54296,15
40 POKE 54296,7
50 FOR T=1 TO 100: NEXT T
60 GOTO 30
```

Helicopter sound listing.

Home-Grown Characters

Very often, when writing games for your 64, it would be nice to have access to some new characters, a space invaders character, for example, instead of having to make do with combinations of existing characters.

On the 64, the standard character set is stored in ROM and the contents of this ROM cannot be altered. To overcome this problem, the VIC chip in the 64 needs to be told to use an area of RAM for its character data and then have the ROM character set copied into this RAM area so that program listings etc will make sense.

The following program copies the ROM character set into RAM at location 2048 and then switches the VIC chip to use this block of memory for its character set data. Before you enter and RUN this program, enter the following line as a direct command sequence:

POKE 44,64 : POKE 16384,0 : NEW

This second command line moves your Basic programs up in memory to make room for the RAM version of the character set. Now enter and RUN the following program:

```
10 POKE 56334, PEEK (56334) AND 254
20 POKE 1, PEEK (1) AND 251
30 FOR A=O TO 511
40 POKE 2048+A, PEEK (53248+A) :
     NEXT A
50 POKE 1, PEEK (1) OR 4
60 POKE 56334, PEEK (56334) OR 1
70 POKE 53272, (PEEK (53272) AND
     240) + 2
```

After RUNning this program, the 64 will use the memory from 2048 to 4095 to hold its character set.

Each character is an 8 × 8 block of pixels which can therefore be stored in 8 bytes (each with 8 bits) of memory. The following program gives an example of how to redefine and use one of these characters.

```
100 PRINT CHR$ (147) : PRINT"      ";
     CHR$ (97)
110 FOR T=1 TO 1000 : NEXT T
120 FOR C=O TO 7 : READ B
130 POKE C+2568,B : NEXT C
140 DATA 126,255,153,153,126,126,
     66,126
```

Remarkable Highlights

You list your latest Basic program, looking for a subroutine somewhere that you know contains a bug. As you reach the end of the program, you realise that the required routine managed to scroll by unnoticed and you have to look all over again. But there's a solution.

It is possible to fool the 64's LIST routine into PRINTing colour change characters during the listing of a program. In this way, you could have all your subroutines listed in black, your machine code routines in white, your help menu pages in light blue etc. etc., all the changes being made as the program scrolls by during LISTing.

How? — by using REMark statements containing special control character sequences, as follows.

Each time you want to change colour, enter a line like the following at the place where colour change is to occur:

REM " " [DEL] [CTRL/9] [SHIFT/M] [COLOUR]

Where each pair of square brackets [] contains a single character ie [DEL] means "Press the delete key" (this deletes one of the quote marks) and [COLOUR] is the code from the table below representing the required LISTing colour.

F. Reed,
Islington.

BLACK	[SHIFT/P]
WHITE	[E]
RED	[POUND SIGN]
CYAN	[CBM/*]
PURPLE	[CBM/—]
GREEN	[UP ARROW]
BLUE	[LEFT ARROW]
YELLOW	[SHIFT/UP ARROW]
ORANGE	[SHIFT/A]
BROWN	[SHIFT/U]
LIGHT RED	[SHIFT/V]
DARK GREY	[SHIFT/W]
MEDIUM GREY	[SHIFT/X]
LIGHT GREEN	[SHIFT/Y]
LIGHT BLUE	[SHIFT/Z]
LIGHT GREY	[SHIFT/+]

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A MUST FOR EVERY C128 OWNER!

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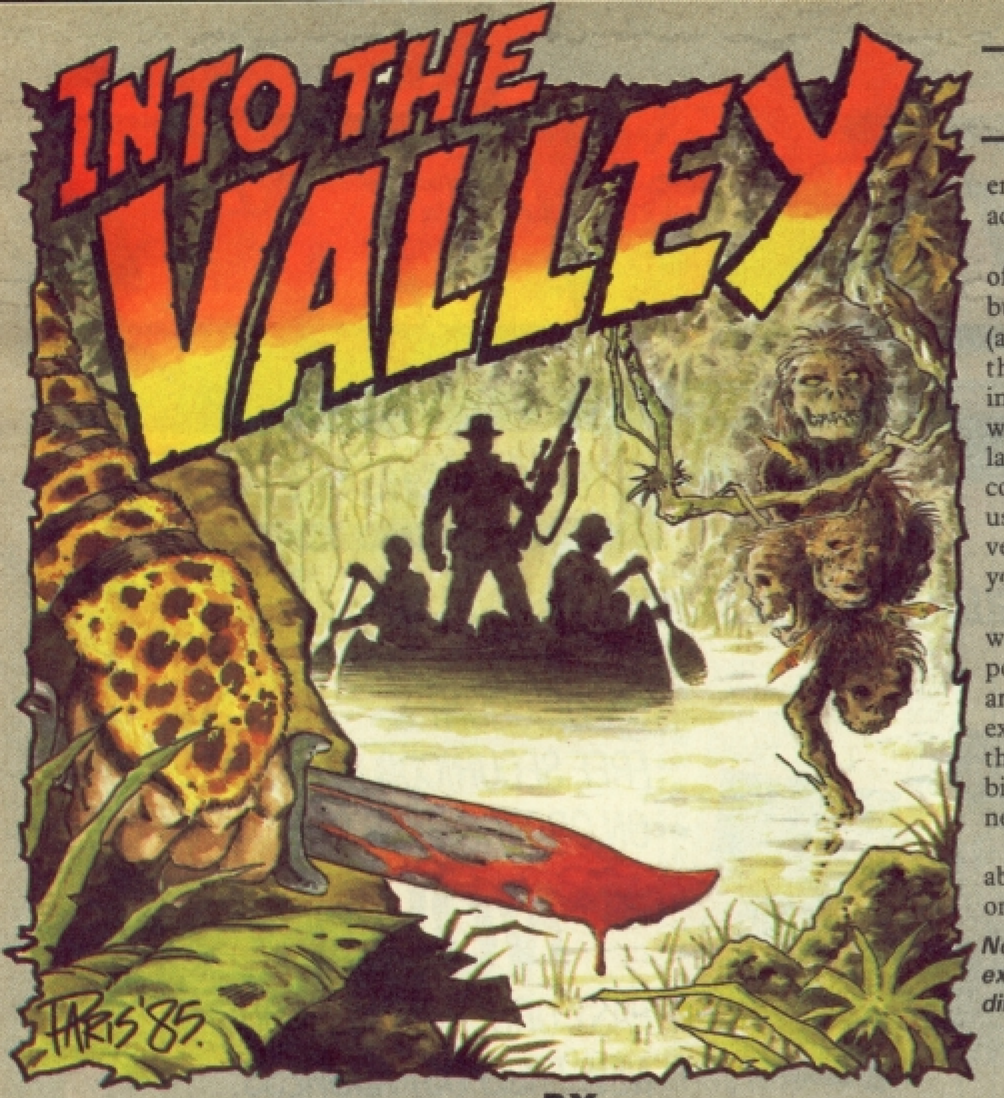
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BY JOHN RANSLEY

It's a case of the good, the bad and the cheapo this month. *Borrowed Time* and *Alternative Reality* get the credits, Mastertronic (who else) provide the cheap thrills and *Star Trek* reaches its final frontier — and flops.

Borrowed Time
GrA
Activision
Price: £14.99/disk

The Noise of angry traffic drifts up from the street below, nearly drowning out the discordant jangling of the phone on your salvage sale desk. You snatch up the handpiece and an unfamiliar voice drills a warning into your ear. It seems a good moment to get some fresh air — but as you hit the sidewalk, a hood with a loud tie and an ever louder .38 pays you more attention than a dime-a-dance girl on a wet Tuesday afternoon . . .

When you start playing **Borrowed Time** (with a startling animated title screen) all you know is that you're a third-rate private investigator with the kind of fans that would like to see you in a wooden box.

But you soon realise that Activision's latest offering sets a new standard of quality and entertainment for the discerning adventurer.

The opening location is your office, and from then on it's busy, busy, busy! Every location (and there are many, many of them) has a really good, instantly-drawn graphic, next to which is a panel that gives you a lazy way of inputting the most common commands — by simply using a joystick to 'point' at the verbs, nouns and movements you choose.

Those pictures are crammed with objects and often significant points of detail. Most of them are cleverly animated so that, for example, the water bubbles in the drinks cooler, washing billows on the line, and the newsvendor's dog wags his tail.

One of the really nice things about *Borrowed Time* is that, once you've dodged into the nearby flophouse to escape the gun-toting pursuer, you can explore plenty of interesting locations and characters in the early stages without too much obstruction — just the way it should be.

Cleverly, you can also enter full sentences in the way more experienced players prefer and the parser will cope with them very well and very quickly. The popular TALK and SAY commands are also available.

The game includes some particularly well thought-out player aids that make *Borrowed Time* an even greater pleasure to tackle.

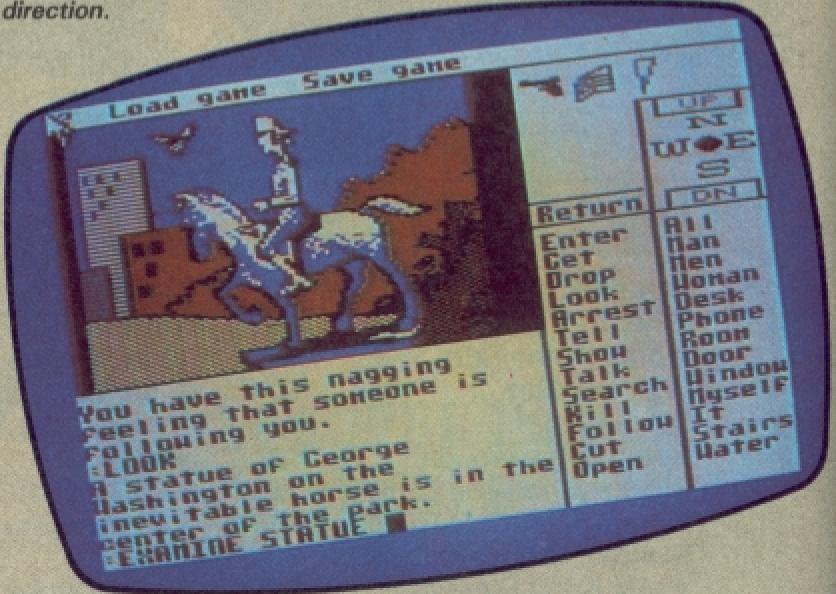
For example, you can string directional commands to reach a location several moves away with a single command, such as NNE. Also, you can not only save up to ten identified versions of the game, but there's also a routine that allows you to 'freeze' and 'unfreeze' your status in memory.

You can also use the function keys to repeat an instruction and to issue the commands TELL ME ABOUT, DROP, and GET ALL.

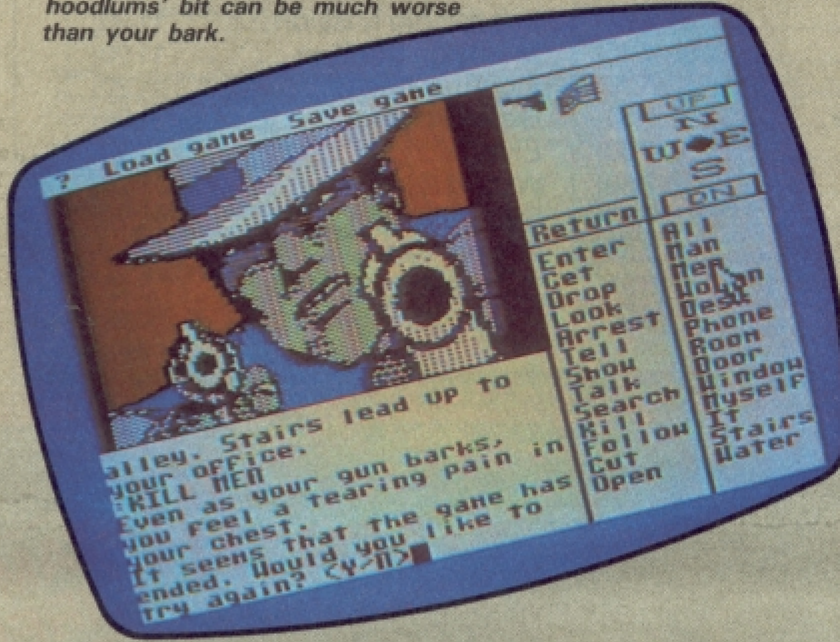
The disk includes a 'living tutorial' (a little gem) so that you can learn to make the most of all features, and to serve as a refresher course in adventuring.

It's not very often that a game of any kind merits unreserved recommendation but *Borrowed Time* is one of those rare exceptions. It has a strong and entertaining story line, really excellent graphics, and instant playability.

Graphics	★★★★★
Playability	★★★★
Puzzleability	★★★
Overall	★★★★★



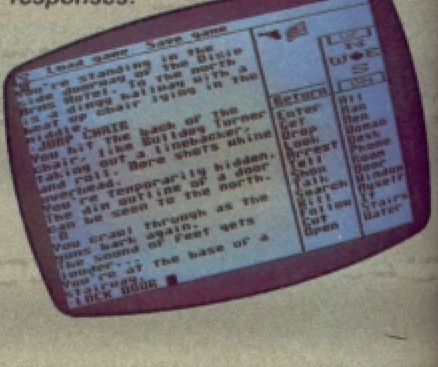
Not all inanimate objects are speechless. Asking questions and examining every object more closely can take you in the next right direction.



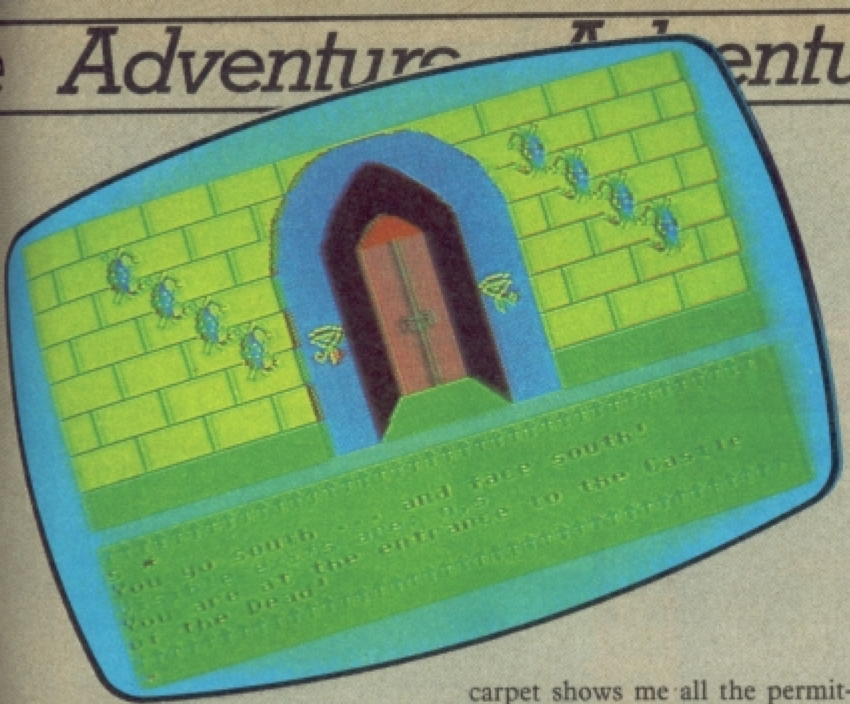
Over-reacting can get you into trouble in Borrowed Time, where the hoodlums' bit can be much worse than your bark.

Se-Kaa of Assiah
GrA
Mastertronic
Price: £1.99/cass

Okay, so you don't have a disk drive and you don't have £14.99 and you think that the Valley's getting too elitist. So what say you to a very tasty two-part 96K adventure with 170 graphic screens, stacks of puzzles and a virtually faultless parser for just £1.99? It's called **Se-Kaa of**



A touch of a key allows you to toggle between Borrowed Time's splendid graphics and the text screen, giving a review of the most recent inputs and responses.



Se-kaa of Assiah — all the features of a good quality adventure for a fifth of the price.

Assiah and it's from Mastertronic — who else?

As the game begins, you find yourself wandering in a countryside near a small village. Further exploration brings you to the gates of Castle Dread, where you're meant to retrieve three sacred artefacts and return them to their rightful place. Only trouble is, it's half-day closing — or something like that.

Must be a key somewhere. Back to the village. Ah — a well! No, nothing down there. Stumble around a little more and suddenly a cloak appears from the heavens, and then a gem-studded staff. Funny — they weren't here the first time.

Seems you have to make a few moves and then return to the right locations before they'll consider showing up. Now I've counted sixteen locations and no way I can reach any others.

Just when I'm beginning to think that this is a very silly game, Beerd arrives with some more information about my tasks and then leaves with the news that he's left the castle doors open for me — but lost souls roam there. Charming.

Back to the castle, and I'm in. Nice graphics, and the old red carpet shows me all the permitted moves in here. Don't hang about, though — 'cos if you do, those horrible little purple wraiths will get you. Ooops, I've moved somewhere I shouldn't and I'm falling through space. I'ts all gone dark. I'm in a huge black room. But wait, I can just make out something drawn on the wall. It's a Chad saying, "Wot, No headache!" . . .

***Se-kaa of Assiah* is terrific value for money, offering all the quality, entertainment and features you'd expect from more expensive games. Graphics are very good, there's a help feature, and you can Save a game whenever you wish.**

Graphics	★★★
Playability	★★★
Puzzleability	★★★★★
Overall	★★★★

Alternative Reality
GrA
Datasoft/US Gold
Price: £14.95

I've been lusting after a chance to get my mits on **Alternative Reality** ever since I saw a sneak preview, and I can tell you that it's been worth the waiting.

It's a little difficult to pigeonhole *The City* — the first in a suite of seven or eight games that will eventually make up the whole setpiece. Is it an adventure, a role-playing entertainment or a strategy game? Well, it's all three and much more besides.

The City slaps you down right in the middle of the action from the very first moments. At first you'll play safe and explore the place from the relative safety of the Floating Gate, but still you'll have to minimise encounters with other characters until a good night's sleep at the inn restores your stamina.

You have a little money to begin with, and you're advised to put a compass at the top of your shopping list. What to do next? Checking out the status readout at the top of the screen will suggest the tasks you're best-equipped to handle. But there are plenty of places to visit and you'd better make a start soon.

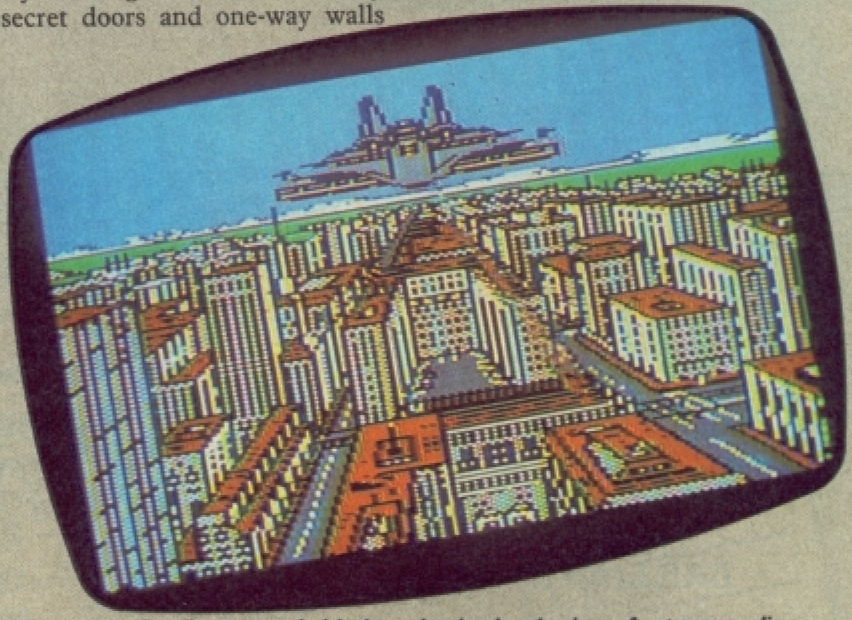
For example, the city has several inns and taverns, a number of banks and shops, and a few smithies and healers. Maybe you should make for one of the fourteen guilds. You could try finding one of the many secret doors and one-way walls that are a feature of the city (great sound effects if you're successful).

A smith will sell you a new weapon, a bank may lend you money, and healers can be useful too. Not all guilds will welcome you at first — but you'll always come away with character-enhancing knowledge, and there's plenty of treasure, gems and jewellery to be found . . . eventually.

You'll also have to learn to live with (and survive) a great many curses, evil potions and poisons, disease, and fights. Not to mention the merchants, couriers, guards, gladiators, dwarfs, wizards, assassins and imps!

In just a few hours of play I won't pretend that I've even begun to scratch the surface of *Alternative Reality* but it's quality through and through, offering a very superior kind of challenge if you're prepared to give it the concentration and time (lots of that) it deserves.

Graphics	★★★★
Playability	★★★★
Puzzleability	★★★★
Overall	★★★★



Alternate Reality — and this is only the beginning. A strange alien spacecraft is almost the least of your difficulties in a game that requires more strategy than a tango with a scorpion.

• ADVENTURE NEWS • ADVENTURE NEWS • ADVENTURE NEWS • ADV

• **Activision** seem to have beat everyone else to the post in producing the world's first graphic adventures for the Amiga. Conversions of *Mindshadow*, *Hacker* and *Borrowed Time* will be out any day — and if you thought the graphics on the 64 were good, wait till you see what the Amiga can do!

• **Where** have all the new adventures releases gone? My guess is that a number of the UK's top software houses are keeping a few surprises up their sleeves for the new Consumer Electronics Show at Olympia this month. Sorry, it's a trade-only event to which the public (who actually *buy* the stuff) won't be admitted. But watch out for my special report and exclusive screen shots of the best new adventures at the show.

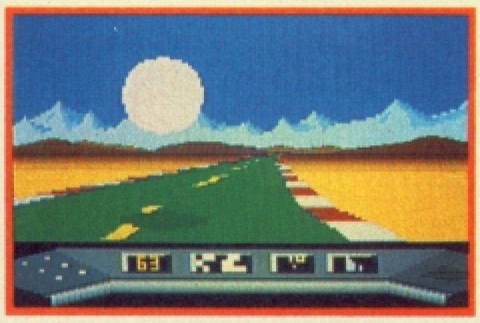
• **Incentive Software** have confirmed that they *will* be producing a 64 version of the *Graphic Adventure Creator*. Originally developed for the Amstrad by a computer sciences graduate. GAC has been winning rave reviews for its simplicity of operation and excellent results. Price will be around £22.95 tape, £27.95 disk. Call Incentive Software on 0734 591678 for more info.

• **Supersoft** are now handling the Print-Technik digitiser that can produce brilliant screen images in up to four colours from a video camera or recorder, store them on disk, and incorporate them in graphic adventures — that's if you've got £150 to spare. More details from Supersoft on 01-861 1166.

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by Adam Billyard



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• **Taskset's** plans to launch a C64/128 version of *Souls of Darkon* have now it seems disappeared down the tubes together with the rest of the company's future. Taskset chief Andy Walker, had hoped to get *Souls* out in time for Easter, but this was dashed by his decision to close the company. At press time there seemed no sign of a buyer for Taskset, so there's little chance of the company's debut adventure ever being seen.

• **Infocom**, responsible for *Zork*, *Deadline* and *Hitchhiker's Guide* have run out of hints to survival and have been sold to Activision for around £7 million. Infocom, were in trouble for most of last year after a disastrous move into business software, and recently said goodbye to 15 staff and co-founder Marc Blanc. At Christmas, they appointed Softsel as their British distributors and promised cut-price CP/M versions of old titles plus all-new versions for the Amiga, but none of that happened. In recent months, Activision have been taking a much higher profile in the adventure sector and have won acclaim for titles such as *Mindshadow* and *The Tracer Sanction*. They're look-alive marketing expertise is likely to mean some pleasant surpises ahead for adventurers on both sides of the Atlantic.

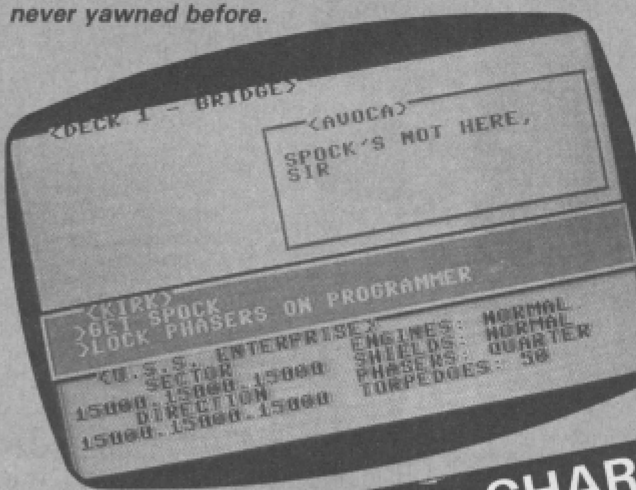
• **Modem House** have only just coughed up the Micronet gizmo I've been waiting three months to arrive — apologies to Valley readers who've sent me mailboxes but didn't get any response. I'd be really pleased to receive any comments and suggestions you may have, but no "How do I . . .?" queries, please. I just don't have the resources to deal with them and there's always Micronet's Adventure Helpline if you're really stuck. My Prestel Mailbox number is 919995001.

• **Adventure International's** worst-kept secret is that they've been having meaningful discussions with megasuccessful distributors US Gold. Interestingly enough, AI themselves started as purely a marketing operation for Scott Adams, but with the success of *Gremlins* and *Robin Hood*, and with very little coming from the States these days, it's thought that AI chief Mike Woodruffe and co-writer Brian Howarth now want to concentrate on writing more blockbusters and let someone else handle the marketing of them.

• ADVENTURE NEWS • ADVENTURE NEWS • ADVENTURE NEWS • ADVE

Star Trek — The Kobayashi Adventure

Ta
Simon and Schuster
Price: N/A (disk only)



Star Trek — just a passing phaser? The adventure that invites you to boldly yawn where you have never yawned before.



Scintillating screen display!?

You'd expect **Star Trek: The Kobayashi Adventure** — which is the first-ever adventure based on the apparently immortal TV series — to pack enough punch to beam up a ten ton truck. How could any programmer go wrong?

Well, author Diane E Duane has managed to do so with apparently very little effort. She must have had her head in a bucket when she took a shot at programming this dire effort — quite possibly the worst 'adventure' I've ever played, and that includes those 3.5K epics some nuts used to cram into a Vic.

The scenario (though it hardly matters) involves you taking the part of Captain Kirk in search of a missing starship. There is a single screen, relieved only by a couple of pull down-style panels that contain various responses. You give orders and grow old waiting for the replies.

There are a load of numbers along the bottom of the screen that are meant to look scientific but are just plain silly. In fact, the whole shooting match is an absolute abomination.

I'm told there are no plans to market it in the UK, for which we can only be truly grateful. Beam me up Scottie! — Scott Adams, that is.

Graphics	★★
Playability	★
Puzzleability	★★★★★
Overall	★

• CHARTS •

1 (2) **The Lord of the Rings** — C64/128 (Melbourne House, GrA, £15.95)
2 (9) **Doomdark's Revenge** — C64/128 (Beyond Software, GrA, £9.95.)
3 (1) **The Worm in Paradise** — C64/128 (Level 9, GrA, £7.95)
4 (5) **Quest for the Holy Grail** — C64/128 (Mastertronic, GrA, £1.99)
5 (10) **Masquerade** — C64/128 (All American Adventures, GrA, £14.95 disk only.)
6 (6) **The Odyssey** — C64/128 (Duckworth, TA, £9.95)
7 (3) **Seas of Blood** — C64/128 (Adventure International, GrA, £9.95)
8 (4) **Secret Diary of Adrian Mole** — C64/128 (Mosaic, GrA, £7.95)
9 (7) **The Never ending Story** — C64/128 (Ocean Software, GrA, £9.95)
10 (8) **Robin of Sherwood** — C64/128 (Adventure International, GrA, £7.95.)

Lord of the Rings still claims its rightful place at the head of the Valley's Top Ten this month. And intelligent gamesters will doubtless ensure its top spot for a little more time to come.

As for the rest of the chart, it's really just a question of all change, with new British adventures appearing as well as the largely excellent American stuff reviewed this month (still no sign of *Old Scores*, and *Souls of Darkon* has, it seems, been and gone — see Adventure News).

The only climbers this month are — spectacularly — *Doomdark's Revenge* and Mastertronic's budget reissue, the latter justifying the decision of British Telecom, Beyond's new owners, to let the 64 version see the glow of midnight after it had been unaccountably held back.

Pre-Easter releases should bring a new look to next month's Adventure Top Ten, but no one should be surprised if the American labels hang on in there in the absence of any megastrong competition; Pete Austin and Brian Howarth — you *do* have something up your sleeves, don't you?

SUPER SLEUTH Comp.

WIN 'Borrowed Time'



American authors beat everybody when it comes to writing gripping, gritty and gutsy detective stories with the hero as a hard drinking, tough living, fast-talking, but deep-down decent guy — shucks.

Thrillers like these have provided the inspiration for Masquerade (reviewed last month and now in our charts) and Activision's latest and (I'd say) best-ever graphic adventure, **Borrowed Time**.

Activision, not wishing 'de boys' to pay them a visit, are donating ten copies of *Borrowed Time* for this month's Valley competition.

HOW TO ENTER

We've selected three of America's most famous authors of bestselling detective stories and printed their names below. Well, all but their surnames, that is. You must fill in the blanks; we've even give you the first letter and a guide to the total number of letters. The names are:

A. ED M..............................
B. ERLE STANLEY G ....
C. MICKEY S..............................

Please add your name and address and the titles of your three favourite current adventures.



The missing surnames are:

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3 ....

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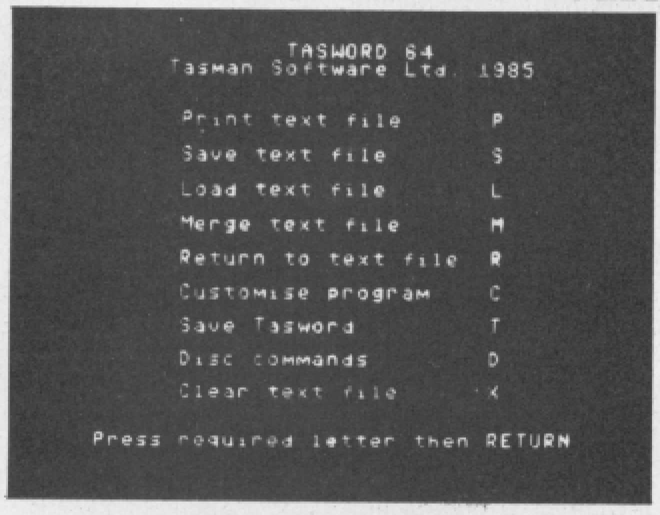
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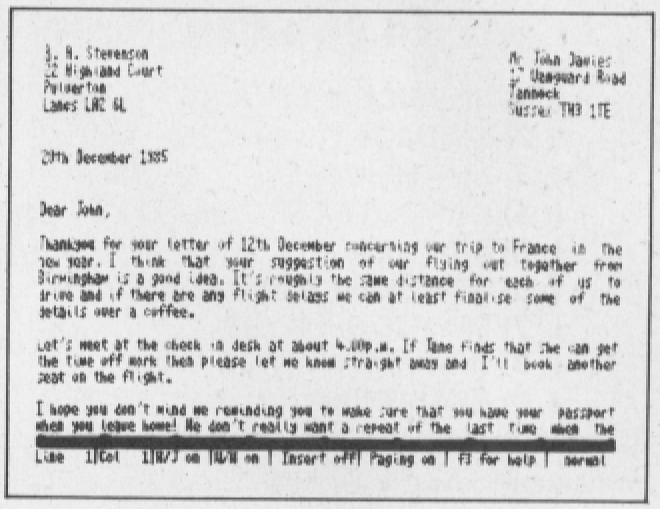


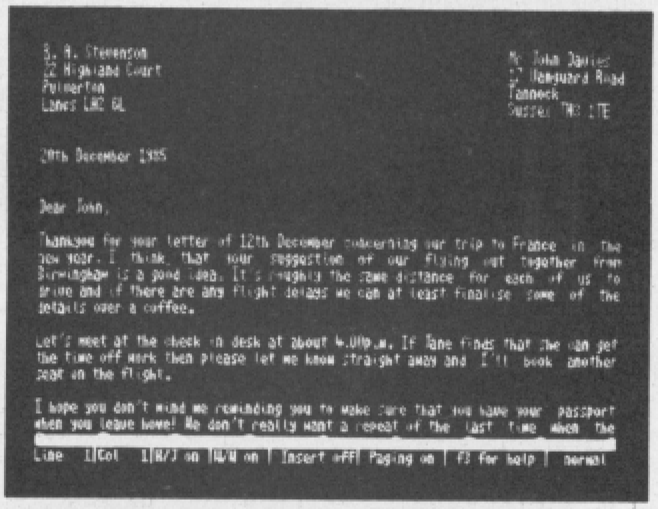
TASWORD 64

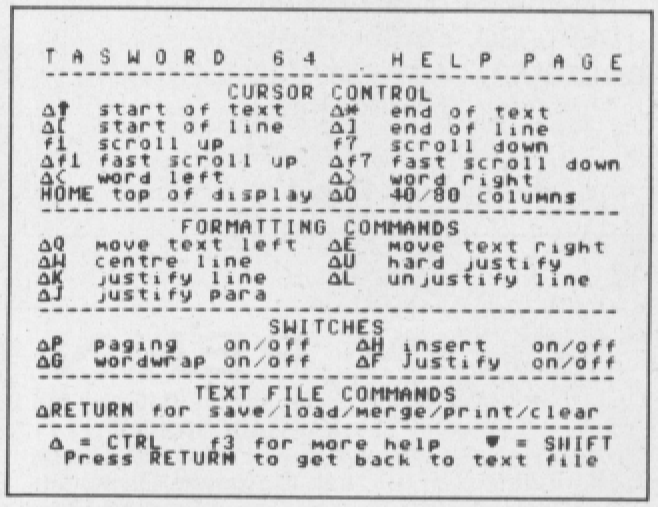
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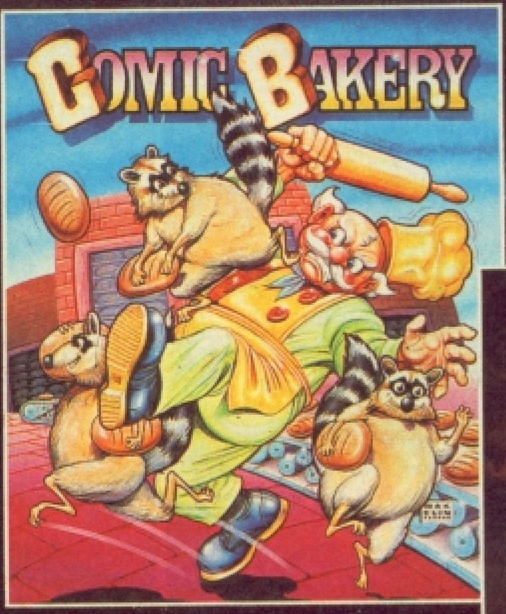
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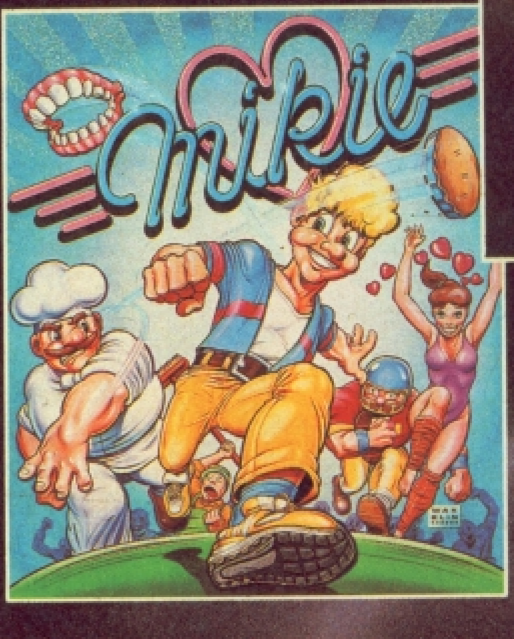
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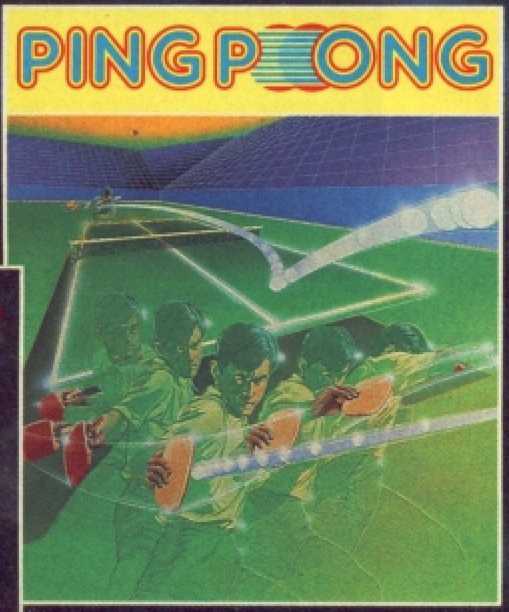
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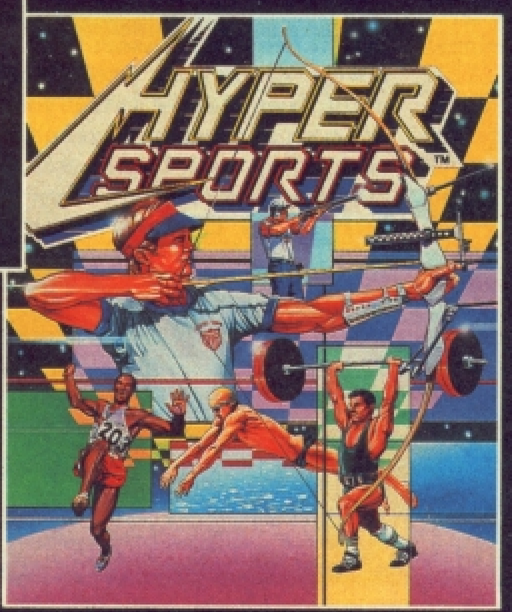
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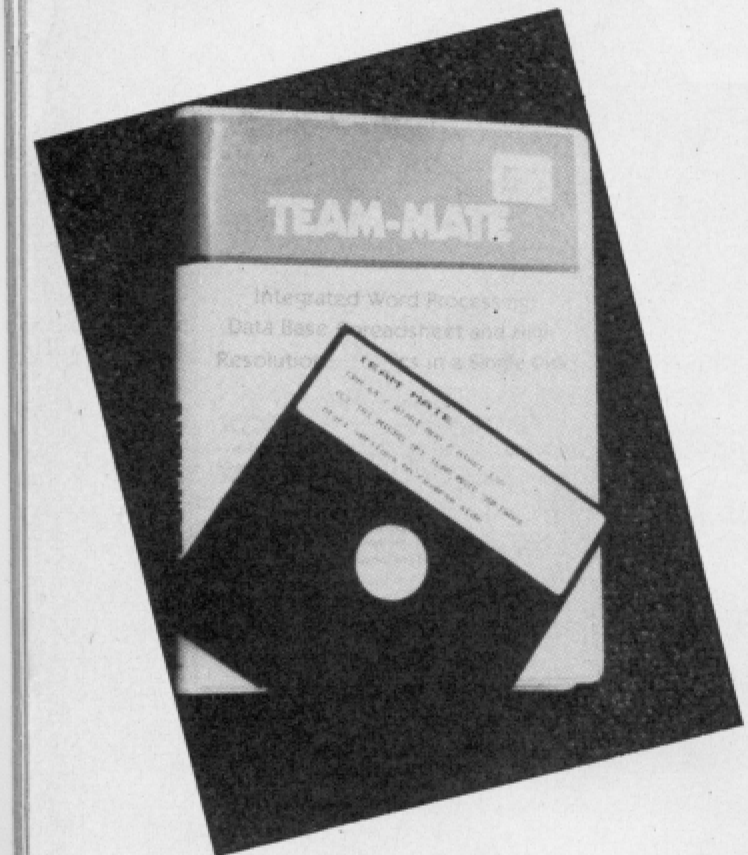
Boots, WHSMITH, John Menzies, WOOLWORTH, LASKYS, Rumbelows, Greens, Spectrum Shops and all good dealers.

4 into 1 won't go

by Geoff Wheelwright

Last month we featured two 128 programs; this month we're back to the good old 64 for a look at Team-Mate, one of the new generation of integrating business programs — it should soon be available on the 128, too.

Team-Mate reviewed



The word 'integrated' seems to have become a magic formula for classy business software — if it doesn't integrate, don't bother buying it, say the know-alls. Even humble machines like the 64 now have an integrating suite of software.

It's called *Team-Mate*. It's cheap (£34.95), it combines a wordprocessor, database, spreadsheet and hi-res graphics, it's all on a single disk — and it's American (in actual fact it's distributed in the UK by Dialog). Sounds pretty good, huh?

But first a little history. Remember the Plus/4, how Commodore launched it two years ago with on-board 'integrating' software, convinced that it would take the small business market by storm? We all know that you can get one now for a slap-up dinner for two.

Well, Team-Mate bears more than a passing resemblance to that fated Plus/4 software. In fact, the manual talks about the ability to transfer Plus/4 files directly to 64 Team-Mate data files. To further confuse matters, on the other side of the Team-Mate disk, you get a version for the Atari 800 and 130XE machines.

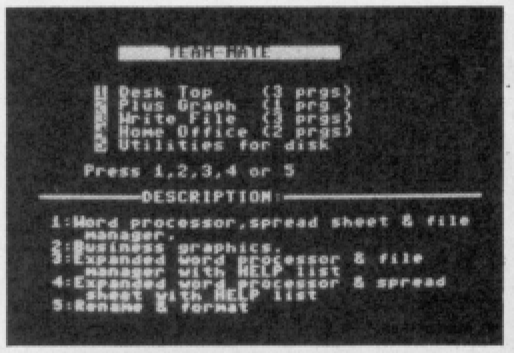
There are even the same kind of 'split-screen' windows as on the failed Commodore business machine — with the same commands used to switch between them. For example, TC takes you to the mini-spreadsheet, TW takes you to the word-processor.

Loading up

Starting at the beginning, Team-Mate offers four major applications facilities including wordprocessing, database development, spreadsheet modelling and business graphics.

As there isn't enough memory in the machine to offer these applications together all at once, so there are several options for loading them which offers them together in various combinations.

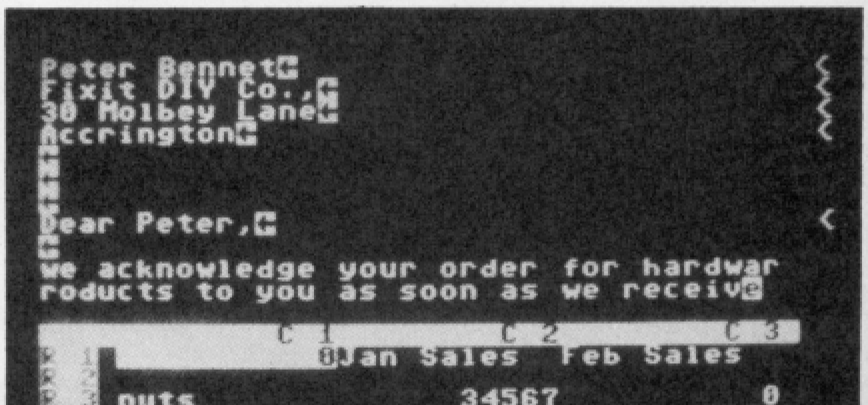
I found this to be a confusing and unnecessarily complicated way of arranging things. It was further detracted from by a truly awful manual — which actually served to add greater confusion. The manual mixes instructions for use with the Atari version and the 64 edition. It switches back and forth between these with impunity and makes it virtually impossible for you to find your way round the documentation with any ease.



Team-Mate can be loaded in many combinations of programs.

All this would perhaps have been forgiveable if the applications themselves had been any good. Unfortunately, I was no more impressed by the applications within Team-Mate than I was by the Plus/4 built-in software on which it seems to be based. Let's look at the sections individually.

● **The wordprocessor:** this uses the annoying 77-character 'scroll-across' method of displaying text — so that you can never see even so much as a complete sentence on-screen at once. I much prefer either the 40-column mode with an 80-column 'preview' as used by Easyscript or the



Split-screen facility showing wordprocessor above and the spreadsheet below. Data transfer is possible between the two.

redefined character set which gives you true on-screen 80 characters in packages such as Tasword 64.

The wordprocessor also imposes a limitation of up to 99 lines of text per file — and doesn't 'spool' text to disk to allow longer files. You can, however, 'link' individual files from disk into a single document.

● **The spreadsheet:** a confusing collection of code and commands which (in one of its modes) can be used to create both spreadsheet models as well as 'business graphics'.

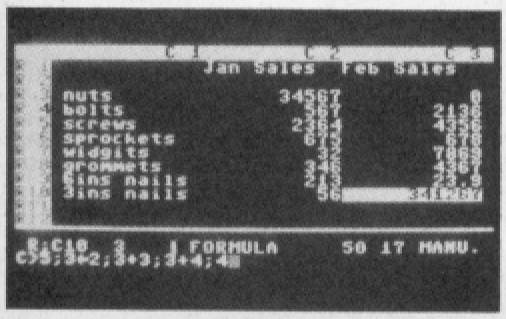
It offers up to 850 cells (17 columns by 50 rows) and using the 'Plus Graph' module, information from the spreadsheet can be taken into pie, line graph or bar graph charts.

The graphics produced are much better than those on the Plus/4, with actual lines and curves on-screen (instead of ASCII characters stacked on top of one another).

The spreadsheet also allows figures to be 'exported' to the wordprocessor, and this facility seemed to work quite well.

● **The database:** this is, I'm afraid, a little wimpy. Once again, it's difficult to use and offers little power. You can develop relatively large (at least for a 64) databases offering up to 999 records (although I can't see who would) per file and mere files and reports into the wordprocessor.

Disappointingly, there didn't seem to be any easy way to 'mailmerge' files into the wordprocessor.



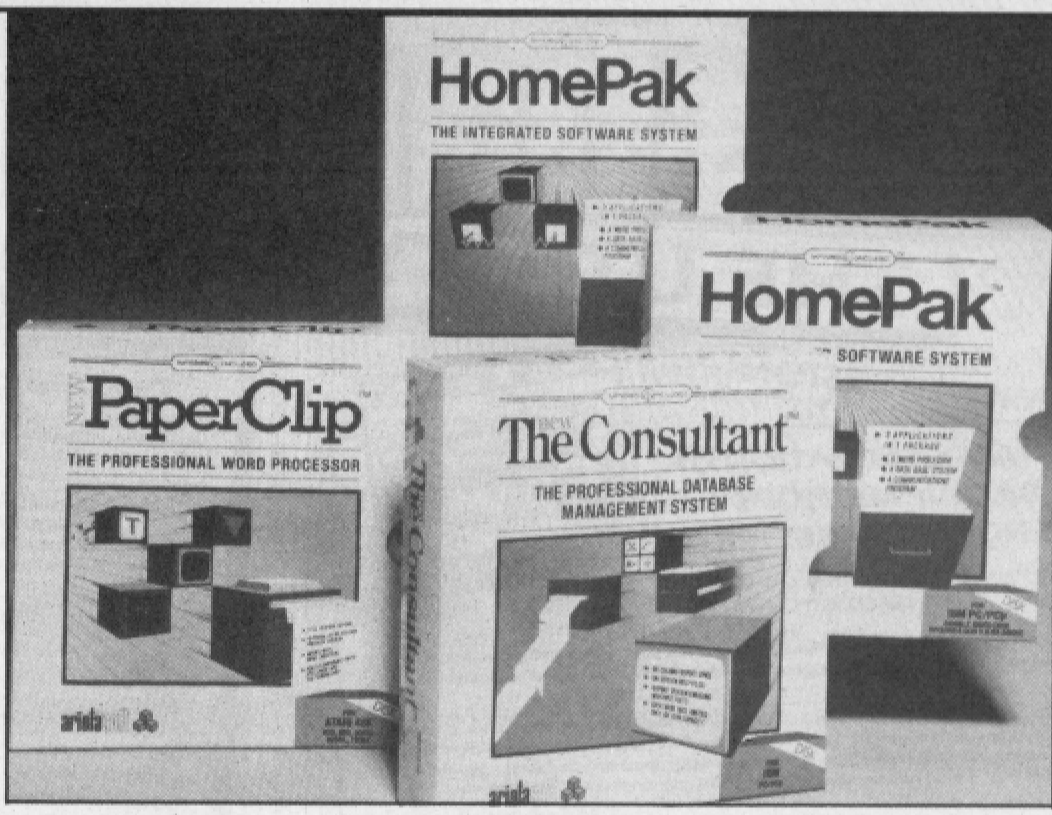
Spreadsheet program offers a maximum 17 columns by 50 rows.

Conclusions

Overall, I was not impressed by Team-Mate. It looks more like the kind of software used on my old Apple II way back in 1981, than state-of-the-art software for the Commodore 64 in 1986.

The company is apparently planning a new version to run on the Commodore 128 — but it isn't ready yet. I can't say I'm surprised — there's a lot to fix and improve.

- Team-Mate (for the 64)
- Team-Mate Software, Debden Green, Saffron Walden, Essex DB11 3LX. Tel: 0371 831009
- Price: £34.95 (disk only)



News News

128 Wanderings

There's been a flurry of activity around business software development for the Commodore 128 and 128D in the past few months, with new packages on offer from Commodore itself and third-party offerings — such as the promised Team-Mate (see story opposite) 128 conversion — under development.

Ariolasoft is even being more ambitious, planning new versions of older programs for the 64 that include enhanced versions for the 128.

● **The New Consultant** — a database system which offers an 'endless' number of records (limited only by disk capacity), a 'browse' facility, a promise to sort a full disk in only fifteen seconds and on-screen help files. For the 64, it's £44.95 — the enhanced version for the 128 is £59.95.

● **The New Paperclip** — the popular US word processor which offers facilities such as automatic page numbering, headers and footers, form letter, mailing list and label-printing functions and a print preview mode. The 128 version is expected to offer an 80-column screen. It costs £44.95 and you get both 64 and 128 versions on the same disk.

● **HomePak** — A limited-function home integrated software suite which combines the jobs of word-processing, mini database and computer-to-computer communications in a single bundle. Only the 64 version here, costing £34.95.

All three of the packages are expected to be available through Ariolasoft by the time you read this.

● **Cut and Paste** — Claimed to be a real easy-to-use wordprocessor. *Cut and Paste* was written by Electronic Arts but is being marketed in the UK by Ariolasoft. It's disk-based, for the 64 (128 compatible) and costs £24.95. 'Learn to use it in several minutes' claims the blurb. We'll be reviewing it soon.

64 In Print

Business applications on the 64, however, have not been forgotten. A press release which crossed my desk last week announced the release of a new book which shows you how to set up a business application with your 64.

Business Systems on the Commodore 64 by Susan Curran and Margaret Norman is published by Granada Technical Books at £6.95 in May and you can expect to see a review of it soon in these pages.

News News

Next month, we'll be starting our 'Get More From' series by looking at ways you can make better use of Easyscript. After that, we're looking at Vizastar, so if you've any problems or questions about using it, write to Geoff Wheelwright, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

Evesham Micros

THE UTILITY SPECIALISTS

Disc-Disector

NEW MK. II VERSION

FREEZE FRAME

THE NEW GENERATION OF BACKUP METHODS IS NOW EVEN BETTER

MORE FINAL THAN THE "FINAL CARTRIDGE"
THE LAST WORD IN BACKUP TECHNOLOGY

"Freeze Frame" has enjoyed **incredible success for the past few months. Sales both in the U.K. and abroad have been very good and thousands of satisfied customers** are using them.

Continual development has enabled us to launch an **improved version** of the product that incorporates a few useful improvements **PLUS** it is **even more powerful**. At the time of going to press our **thorough testing could not find one single, memory resident, program that "Freeze Frame" could not handle.** (This includes ALL the latest software up to 4th March, 1986.)

OPERATING "FREEZE FRAME"

"Freeze Frame" is simplicity itself to use. It is cartridge based so it is simply plugged into the cartridge port. When the computer is switched on a message is displyed, pressing "RETURN" will clear the computer back to the normal start up screen. Software can now be loaded from tape or disc **completely as normal**. The latest version of "Freeze Frame" will, to the best of our knowledge, allow **ANY software** to load and run normally (unlike competitive products).

"Freeze Frame" can be brought into operation at any convenient point by pressing the button on it. You can then do one of three things:

1. **Pressing "D" will save a working version of the program in memory to a formatted disc. This version will include a high speed reload.**
2. **Pressing "S" will do the same as "D" except that the reload will be at standard 1541 load speed. (Also suitable for U.S. spec. machines, 4040 drives, fast load cartridges, etc.)**
3. **Pressing "T" will save a working version of the program in memory to tape. This incorporates a high speed reload at approx. 2400 baud.**

THAT IS IT!!

ALL PROGRAMS SAVED WITH "FREEZE FRAME" CAN BE RELOADED INDEPENDANTLY OF THE UTILITY

THE MOST FLEXIBLE BACKUP SYSTEM IN THE WORLD?

Does any other utility offer all this?

TAPE TO DISC	**DISC TO TAPE**
DISC TO DISC	**DISC TO TAPE**

PLUS the added flexibility of being able to save at any stage and return to that posiotion, because programs restart from the point where the button is pressed.

An awe inspiring success rate.

Customise programs by putting in POKEs for endless lives, etc. and then save with those active.

Reload independant of the cartridge.

Available now.

ANSWER: NO
"FREEZE FRAME"
HAS NO SERIOUS COMPETITION

THE COMPETITION

A successful product always spawns imitators and "Freeze Frame" is certainly no exception. Fortunately for us, but perhaps not for the people who have purchased them, their main similarity seems to be in advertising style.

"The Final Cartridge" is a good product in many ways. **BUT** when it comes to making backups it is just not in the same class as "Freeze Frame". Another major drawback, not made clear by advertising is that saved programs can **ONLY be reloaded with the cartridge in situ.** (The use of the term "Freeze Frame" in their adverts is merely an attempt to benefit from the success and advertising of our product.)

"UPC1" has it's uses but in it's current form **cannot be taken seriously** as competition for "Freeze Frame".

ONLY £39.95

Owners of earlier versions can return them and upgrade for £14.95

SERIOUS WARNING: THIS IS AN EXTREMELY POWERFUL PRODUCT AND IS STRICTLY FOR PERSONAL USE. DON'T COMPARE IT WITH ANY OTHER PRODUCT, NOTHING ELSE OFFERS THE POWER OF "FREEZE FRAME".

DISC DISECTOR V4.0

Now the fourth generation of the countries **leading** disc back up/utility package is available. Various improvements have been incorporated to re-establish "Disc Disector" as the **ultimate weapon**. Of particular importance are the following.

"Evesham Turbo Nibbler" is the **latest version** of the infamous "Evesham Nibbler" now boasting **even more power and speed**. Will now copy even the most highly protected discs in **3-4 minutes**. Handles all the latest types of disc protection **completely automatically**. At the time of going to press this program copied **every disc program available for testing,** including the latest in games and business software. (It even copies '128 format or discs in CPM mode on the '128.)

"Dual Drive Nibbler" allows the use of two drives to make **even faster back ups**. Incorporates device number change software so no hardwar mods necessary.

"Nova Transfer" will **transfer to disc** the latest Nova Load programs, including **multi stage loaders**. A very useful utility that also transfers two very popular programs that load more information as the program progresses.

"DISCO" will transfer standard speed load software to disc.

"TRANS QD" allows you to save a fast load system to your own discs.

"DOUBLE BACKUP" is a **very fast** two drive backup.

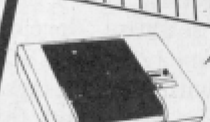
As well as these important newcomers all the old favourite utilities which have helped earn "Disector" such a large following are included. These include **Menu Maker (selective), Fast Format, Unscratch, Disc Monitor, Disc Orderly, Fast File Copy, Index, etc., etc.**

The whole package is menu driven and has its own fast boot system built in for your convenience. Pays for itself the firt day you receive it.

ONLY £29.95

Customers with earlier versions may return them along with a payment of £9.95 to receive V4.0

All programs are CBM 128 and 1570/71 compatible in '64 mode



DATA RECORDER

A **dedicated** data recorder designed for use on the CBM 64 or Vic-20. Specification as C2N but **with pause button.** Model available for the PLUS4 or 16 at same price.

SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.
ONLY £29.95

DOUBLER

The tape back up "device"

Doubler has been an **enormous success** and continues to sell very well. Why? Because it is the **best product of its type** on the market. Doubler uses a unique method that copies **all types of software** regardless of speed. It consists of **hardware and software**. The software is the key part as unlike other products of its type Doubler creates a **brand new machine copy**. It is very easy to use and very successful. In fact our tests **have proved** that this "device" can achieve **100% success**.

Requires access to two data recorders.

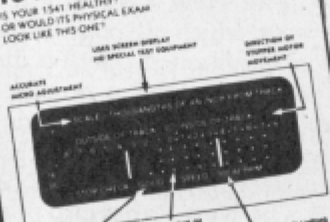
ONLY £12.95

Why settle for less—this is the best.

ALIGNMENT PROBLEMS?

1541 PHYSICAL EXAM £39.95

IS YOUR 1541 HEALTHY? OR WOULD ITS PHYSICAL EXAM LOOK LIKE THIS ONE?



The program includes a digital alignment disc and software which allows you to **accurately check and correct** disc drive alignment. The instruction booklet is **very detailed**. Also includes quiet drive stops to **stop** that "hammering" thus preventing further problems.

ONLY £39.95

Quickdisc+

FAST LOAD PLUS UTILITY CARTRIDGE

Get a **QUICKDISC+** cartridge plugged into your '64 and your
1541 will really **start to perform**. So many features per pound
(sterling) that you will hardly believe it. Includes the following . . .
Fast LOAD (four to five times normal speed). Works with
majority of protected software. Can be switched in and out from
the keyboard.
Fast SAVE at twice normal speed.
Fast Format takes just 20 seconds.
Fast Backup copies an entire disc in four minutes. (Not heavily
protected software.)
Fast File Copier for selective fast copying.
Improved DOS commands (DOS 5.1) makes for easy use of
the disc drive. e.g. $(RETURN) will LOAD and display a directory
without overwriting BASIC. SHIFT RUN/STOP will LOAD
"0:*",8,1 etc. etc. very very useful.
Incorporates Centronics Printer software (user port)
with CBM graphics capability. See "Commodore
Connexion" for suitable lead.
A RESET switch is fitted. (We have found this to be
"unstoppable", it also preserves the tape buffer.)
NO MEMORY IS USED by this cartridge. It is totally
"transparent" and uses special switching techniques.
"128" compatible in '64 mode.
Now the price. No not £49.95, it's **not even half** that much.
Can you afford to be without QUICKDISC+

ONLY £19.95

No extra connections are necessary with QUICKDISC+ and unlike most similar products it is compatible with printers and second drives.

QUIET DRIVE STOPS

This package incorporates new drive stops for **two 1541s** that will **end for good** the
dreaded "woodpecker". The fitting process is very easy and a test program is provided to
check the fitment. Helps prevent future alignment problems and makes your drive purr with
satisfaction.

ONLY £4.95

3M Floppy Disks

BOXES OF TEN DISCS

SS/DD	£16.00
DS/DD	£20.00

NEW SPECIAL PACKS WITH PLASTIC CASE

SS/DD	£17.00 including Case
DS/DD	£21.00 including Case



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Access

VISA

HAPPY HACKER

If you've got tired of Compunet and Micronet, or you can't afford the subscription, there are plenty of free 'bulletin boards' you can access with your 64 and modem. Some are special-interest, some are just boring, but MicroGnome is in a class of its own — Gnomelover Ken McMahon finds out why.

What is *MicroGnome*? Er, it's Uncle Jim and his Junior Gnome Ranger Club, it's trivia, it's babbling with Gandalf, it's Goblination, it's a quick 'n' easy guide to flying a helicopter, it's longrange weather forecasts for astrology buffs — it's a bit weird.

Put simply, *MicroGnome* is a bulletin board run independently by enthusiasts on the 1200/75 baud viewdata format used by Prestel. That means you can access it with your Commodore 64 and modem, in the same way as Compunet and Micronet.

But the similarity ends there. *MicroGnome* is (at present) completely free and although it offers the kind of news, information, 'chat' facilities and reviews that 'the professionals' provide, it's often very original and funny — though you please yourself about the latter.

MicroGnome's three founders are professionals in communication. Glyn Phillips, Bob Clark and Terry Horridge are collectively known as Softmachinery, a company specialising in videotext, telesoftware and the like. They originally started MicroGnome on what's now become the Gallery on Micronet but left it after certain 'differences' between the two.

Glyn Phillips and Co look after the *MicroGnome* database from two rooms in an unlikely North London semi. And they don't use megaRAM equipment like the Big Boys. The database runs on BBC micros using just two phone lines — only two people can be on-line at once. But it's small enough to let you look at everything in one session — and you only get around fifteen minutes before Glyn's itchy finger pulls the plug on you.

What's on

Which brings us on to what there is to look at. For newsfreaks, Steve Gold of MicroMouse fame provides weekly updates on latest events in the micro industry. Commodore's dire financial straits is the current hot news.

Alternatively there is ample opportunity to spout forth your views on one of the Babble Boards. There are about half a dozen boards to choose from, catering for different interests including the Ben Board for politicos, Trivia, and the latest addition — the Technoboard.

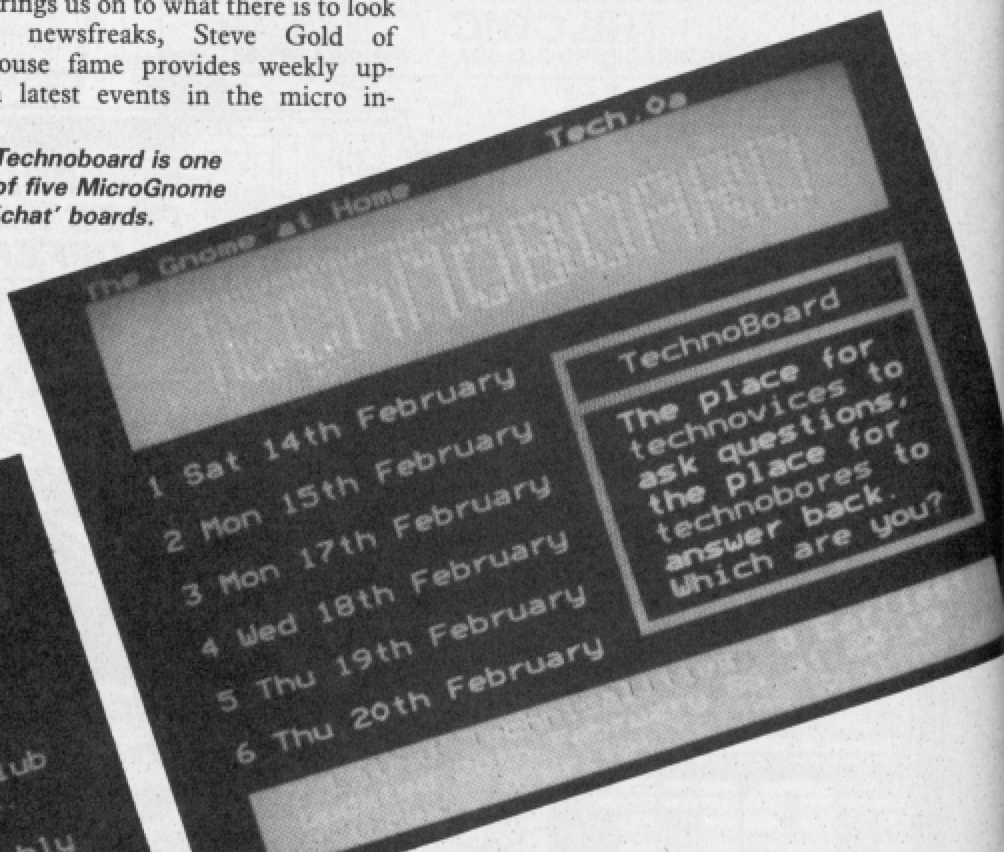
This is where you get the answers to those niggly problems like 'how can I interface my 64 to the washing machine?'. For a reply you'll have to rely on a fellow 64 owner to provide the answer and this is becoming increasingly likely as more Commodore users log on and browse around.

This kind of thing is, of course, what bulletin boards are all about. It's also just as gratifying if you can provide an answer for a fellow hacker who's fumbling around in the dark.

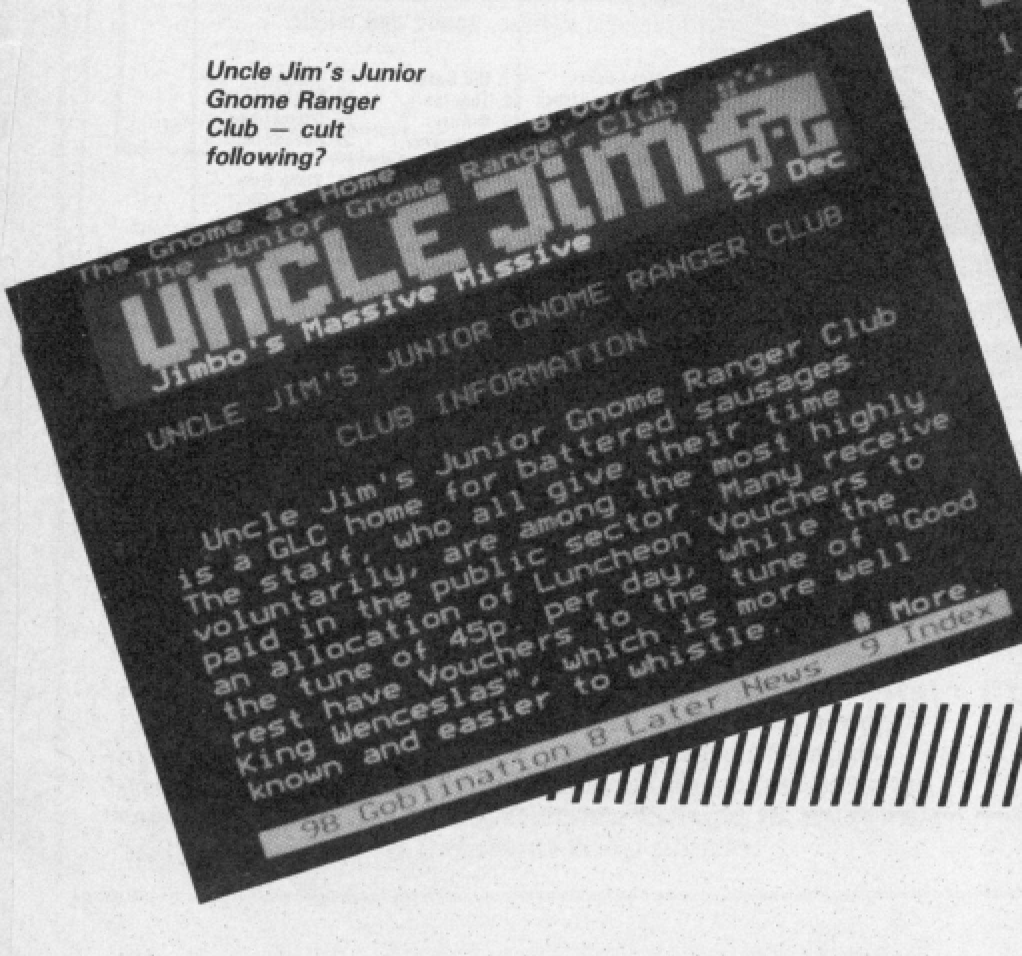
Everyone's favourite Uncle

Then we come to what many people regard as the star feature of MicroGnome. This is Uncle Jim's Junior Gnome Ranger Club.

Technoboard is one of five MicroGnome 'chat' boards.



Uncle Jim's Junior Gnome Ranger Club — cult following?



UJJGRC is the kind of thing that's hard to describe without actually showing somebody. Suffice it to say that Uncle Jim's particular brand of humour will either baffle you or leave you rolling around on the floor. I must admit to exhibiting the latter response.

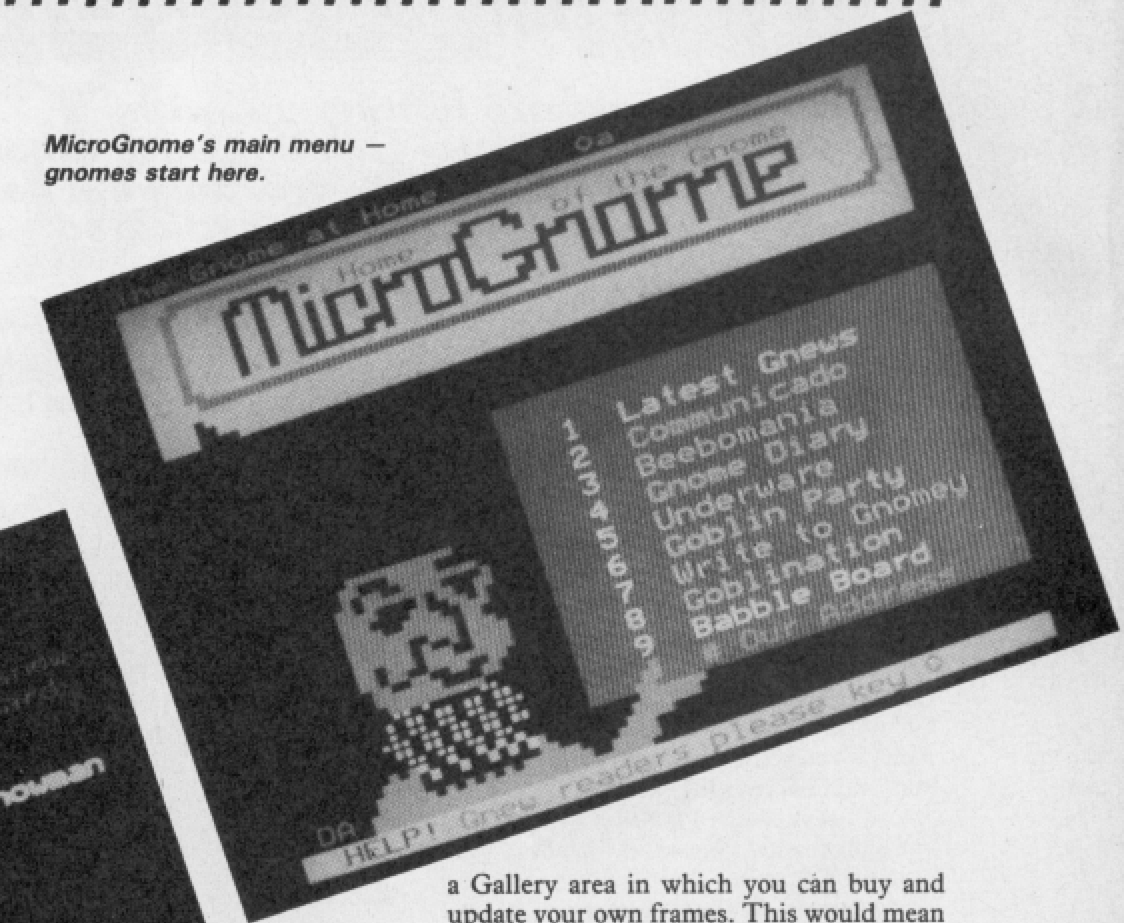
Regular features in Uncle Jim's column

include handy hints on how to fly a helicopter ("it's not as difficult as people would have you believe") and how to build an anemometer ("watch your mother gawp in amazement as you lay your instrument on the tea table!").

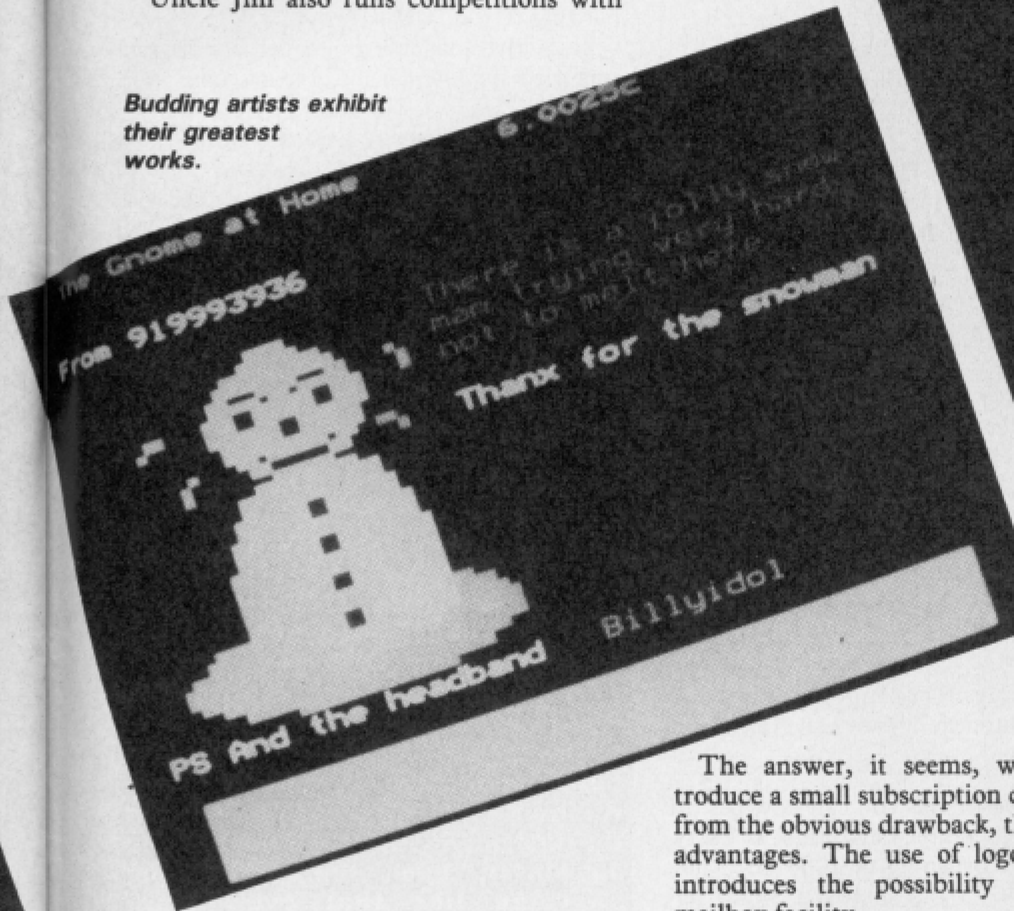
Uncle Jim's family medical page covers topics as diverse as 'why men fart' to 'how to avoid old age' — apparently an illusion brought on by the inability to remember the names of contemporary pop groups.

Then there's 'The Mystery Of Botty Grange, an ongoing Famous Five type serial à la Comic Strip.

Uncle Jim also runs competitions with lucrative prizes. Two of the most spectacular giveaways to date have been a photograph of Uncle Jim's cousin's wedding and a walk on part in The Mystery of Botty Grange.



MicroGnome's main menu — gnomes start here.



Budding artists exhibit their greatest works.

No more Gnome?

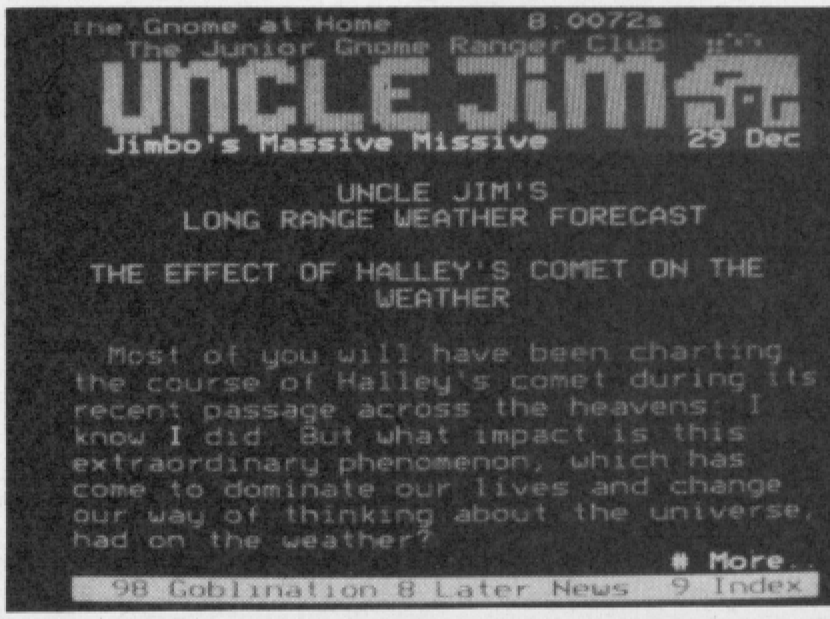
Alas, news has just come in that Softmachinery are no more. Their demise was brought about by financial problems and Bob Clark's departure. As The Gnome's existence thus far has been justified solely in it being a window and testbench for Softmachinery's products, its future is in considerable jeopardy.

The answer, it seems, will be to introduce a small subscription change. Apart from the obvious drawback, there are some advantages. The use of logon passwords introduces the possibility of a private mailbox facility.

Glyn Phillips also has plans to introduce a Gallery area in which you can buy and update your own frames. This would mean you could create your own mini database, say, specifically for Commodore owners. So there are plenty of plans, which inevitably will need plenty of money.

Meanwhile MicroGnome remains free, at least for the time being. So take advantage of it while you can. If enough people decide to subscribe, the future is assured. Otherwise, the prospects of a homeless Gnome, though sad, is inevitable.

MicroGnome is on 01-888 8894.



No subject is too complex for Uncle Jim's subtle intellect . . .

HAPPY HACKER

The modem wars are hotting up, with Compunet and Micronet rivalling each other to provide the best 'net' software. So we'd better look at what's on offer for the dedicated downloader.
by Geof Wheelwright

● **Well, Bust My Bow —** *Robin of Sherwood, Arc of Yesold* and the *Nodes of Yesod* from Odin Computer are now available on Compunet. This collection of historical classics joins an impressive array on new games — such as *Who Dares Wins II* and *Thunderbirds* — on offer at Compunet.

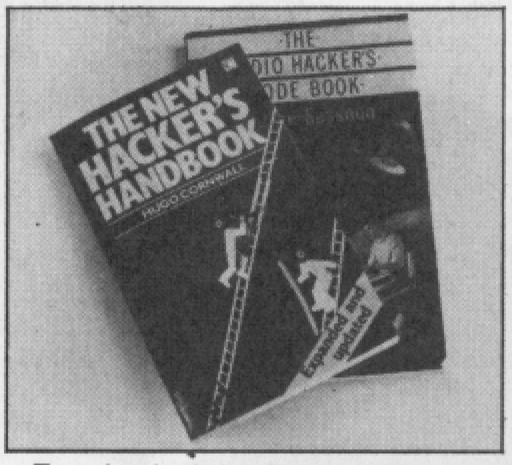
● **Cheapo Wordpros**, etc — Longtime Commodore business software developers Precision and Audiogenic now have a wide range of business software available on Compunet, but make sure you call late at night if you want to download any of these long and heavyweight packages.

The list includes Precision's *Superscript* word-processor, *Superbase* database program, *Supertype* typing tutor and Audiogenic's *Swift* spreadsheet, *Magpie* database and *Wordcraft* word-processor. Compunet also promises that some of the software — such as the Audiogenic Swift spreadsheet — will be available in special Commodore 128 versions.

● **Getting A Cheap Quill** — Writers of Quilled adventures wanting to put their games on Compunet have traditionally faced high storage charges — but now *Reactive* (yet another arcane sub-section of the octopus-like Compunet) is planning to help them out.

It offers technical or editorial advice that Quill authors may need and will aid in the marketing and uploading of Quill-written software. According to his comments on Compunet, Reactive's Al Lenton is looking for tidy adventures with maps — neatness counts. 'We're looking for imaginative Quill adventures with a proper map. It's important to have saved the database as well as the actual adventure — without that, it can't be amended if necessary.' Amend to that. (groan . . .)

● **Book Hacker:** The book they wanted to ban, the book that rocked the Secret Service, the book that made hackers both the heroes and villains of '85 . . . Hugo Cornwall's best selling *The Hacker's Handbook* (Century) is back in a 'revised and expanded' edition. You get a thorough and updated rewrite, more pages, and at £6.95, you pay £2 more. Funnily enough, some of the 'naughty bits' are no longer present — and we still don't know who H. Cornwall really is.



For the hacker with a radio comes George Sassoon's *The Radio Hacker's Code Book*, published by Duckworth (£6.95). If you know what RTTY is and you happen to have a phase lock loop detector, this one's for you. For the rest of us, it's just a good read and an eye-opener into the mysterious world of data transmission and encryption on radio waves. Tune into China's Xinhua News Agency and you'll get rice production figures and table tennis results — a real must.

● **Party For Free?** You can now get the software to operate Compunet's Party-Line for free. By going to 1000 on C'net, you can pick up the standard dumb terminal program and download it free of charge. Be warned, however, that the free software is pretty primitive — you get what you pay for.

● **Please, Mr, Please** — The most amusing missive of the month came as a Compunet Courier message from one Richard Owen, who sent the following message:
'Dear Geof, please can you mention my name in next month's issue of Commodore User in the Happy Hacker section as I betted my friend that I could get you to mention my name. PLEASE!!!!! from Richard Owen'.

If that wasn't enough, our Mr Owen was so keen to win the bet that the following arrived in my mailbox three days after the first message:
'Dear Geof, I hope you received my first letter concerning the Happy Hacker section of *Commodore User*. I still hope you will put my name in as the bet I laid at my school is still valid and I am getting very worried! Please put my name in as I am a great fan of the *User*! Richard Owen'. Consider it mentioned.

● **Micronet Downers** — probably miffed by Compunet's much-improved downloadable telesoftware offerings, Micronet is going for the big one this month by offering a free Star Trek game and Tasman's nifty *Tasword 64* word-processor, on disk for £17.95 (a saving of two quid) to its already extensive line. According to the 'Net's own charts, it's best-selling downloadable games for last month included *Commando* and *Armageddon.*

● A London student has garnered the dubious honour of becoming the first person to be convicted under the new computer fraud laws.

Anthony Antoniou hacked his way into Prestel and struck upon a novel way of sending his girlfriend in Birmingham a Valentine's Day present. He ordered £20 worth of flowers from a florist and gave a bogus credit card number. For his pains, he was recently fined £50 at Richmond Magistrates Court.

We contacted Anthony and asked him the burning question. How did he get caught? "I've no idea to this day," he replied in an incredulous voice. "I actually did it a year ago in January 1985. It was only twelve months later that I was arrested."

The police confiscated his computer and modem. The computer was returned after his conviction but not the modem. So Anthony's not hacking any longer, "I don't think I'll be doing anything like that ever again anyway," he laughs.

Hacking of this kind goes against the hacker's unofficial code of conduct, which suggests that any damage, theft or vandelism caused is wrong and gives hackers a bad name. Anthony Antoniou should perhaps have stuck to saying it with flowers the conventional way.




Explore the depths of history, travel to the far distant future, assemble the mystical map from the seven ages of mankind and become King of the Gnomes
'Probably the best arcade adventure ever produced in the U.S.A.'
Time Tunnel
Intergalactic Spaceship 3556 – You are now in the far distant future, guide your craft to the alien planet but don't venture onto the surface for too long!!!
The Black Hole 9999 – After travelling through time, assemble the map and your incredible task is almost complete...
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Tommy's tips



Argy Bargy

Q As a Commodore 64 user I am constantly amazed at the ever improving graphics obtained on this machine.

I have recently bought a new 14" portable TV which has an RGB interface. How can I utilise the improved clarity of RGB in conjunction with my 64?
M.D. Ursell, Gloucester.

A Funny, I'm sure I've answered this one (frequently) before. If only to cut down the load for the postman staggering up to Tommy's Towers I shall give the answer once more: *the Commodore 64 does not have an RGB output and cannot be used with an RGB monitor.*

The nearest you can get is using the 'Commodore Video' output, which splits the colour and lum/sync signals, to give a better picture than a straight composite video signal can. However, there is no simple way of breaking this down further to give you an RGB signal, so you cannot use your TV/monitor to produce RGB quality pictures.

A know-all writes

Q I got a Commodore 128 for Christmas and since then I have done a lot of programming. I like writing games the best.

By now I feel confident that I know all there is to be known about Basic 7. I would like now to progress on to an even better language.

I would be grateful if you could recommend a language for the 128 which is easy to learn and more powerful than Basic.
R. Donovan, Sheffield.

A It's a bold man who claims he knows everything there is to know about a computer language after only a month, even if it is just Basic.

There aren't many languages around yet for the 128, unless of course you include those that will run in its 64 guise, in which case the choice is extremely wide. You must be careful in choosing a language since the best one will depend on what you want to use it for.

As for ease of learning, this is another personal factor; generally the more powerful a language is, the harder it is to learn how to use all the features that make it powerful.

There are several languages that might fulfil you more than Basic; e.g. *LOGO* and *FORTH* are both popular amongst home computer owners. My personal recommendation would be *PASCAL*, a highly structured language which has many powerful features and is a very good general language for most types of applications.

However, if you want to write fast games programs, there are better ones such as *C*.

There are a number of versions of PASCAL available for the 64; *Oxford PASCAL* at around £50, *Zoom PASCAL* around £25, *PASCAL-64* from Orpheus also £25 and the recently announced *SUPER PASCAL* from First Publishing at £65.

However, none of these can use the 'extra' functions of the 128, such as the 80 column screen, since they will only run in the 64 mode.

Get the point

Q I'm using a Commodore 64 and MPS 801 printer to do some financial work with Basic programs I've written myself. The program gives answers to two decimal places by using defined functions.

The problem occurs when I print the figures out. When I print whole numbers, nothing is printed after the last digit, not even the decimal place.

And for figures like £22.80, the final 'zero' won't print. Is there any way I can't print these figures aligned and in columns, just like a bank statement?
P. Hodgson, Workington

A There are two ways of solving your problem. One involves a machine-code routine which allows a *PRINT USING* type of command. That would take rather more space than I have, so the second and simpler option is to turn the figure into a string, after which you can format it how you like.

The following short sub-routine will do what you require; line 10 is just an example of how to use it:

```
10   INPUT"INPUT A NUMBER";A:
XX=A:GOSUB100: PRINTXX$
20   GOTO10
100 F$=STR$(INT(XX)):S$="."
110 IF XX<>INT(XX) THEN
S$=S$+MID$ (STR$ (100 +
(XX*100) — INT(XX)* 100 +
.001), 3,2)
120 S$=LEFT$(S$+"00",3):XX$=
RIGHT$("        "+F$+S$,9)
130 RETURN
999 REM *** XX$ WILL ALIGN IN
COLUMNS SO THAT THE DECIMAL
POINTS LINE UP ***
```

16 memory swindle

Q I own a Commodore 16 computer and I am very pleased with its capabilities. But when I am using Hi-Res graphics mode, it assigns 10k of RAM to store the data for the bit-mapped screen.

But if I use Hi-Res mode with split screen (which gives me five lines of text at the bottom of the screen) it does not give me back the area of screen which is not being used for Hi-Res. This would give me about 4k of memory in-

stead of 2k at present for 'Basic' text area.

This looks to me like a swindle. Could you please Help me?
Keith Jump, Crewe.

A This is one occasion where all is not what it seems. When you use the 'split screen' you are in fact using parts of *both* screen areas; hi-res and text.

The computer jumps between the two screens at the split point, thus appearing to display only one screen. In fact, the whole hi-res screen is still there; you can still draw in the bottom part even though this would not be seen because the display had switched back to the text screen.

Although you are not using this area for display I am afraid there is no way you can get this area back to Basic, since it is at the 'top' of the hi-res screen area and Basic is below the hi-res screen area.

However, there is nothing to stop you using the memory locations for storing machine code or POKEing values directly since the results will not appear on screen.

But you must be extremely careful not to draw any shape which would extend into this 'blanked' area otherwise it will happily overwrite what you stored there. If you want to try this, the 'hidden' memory locations are contained from 14592 to 16191 inclusive when you have a five line text area.

All strung up

Q I'm having difficulty making sense of the INSTR function on my new C-128, which is supposed to make it easy to compare the contents of different strings. I reckon I could use this in parser routines when I'm writing adventures. Could you please explain how it works, especially since the sample in the System Guide only gives me a syntax error?
John Runcey, Brighton.

A You're right about the INSTR function being useful for adventure writing (you could also use it for search routines in databases). By the way, INSTR is also available on the 16 and Plus/4.

Here's an idea of how it works in adventures to give more compact and elegant parser routines. Take a look at the following little example:

```
10 A$="WAITSLEEPRESTHALT-
CAMP"
20 INPUT "WHAT NOW";V$
30 IF INSTR(A$,V$) >0 THEN 50:
ELSE 40
40 PRINT "YOU "V$:GOTO 20
50 REM TEMPORARY LINE
60 PRINT "YOU CHOOSE TO "VS"
HERE":GOTO 20
```

You'll see that in line 40, we've put five words into the A$ variable. The program is searching for a match between V$ and one of the words contained in A$. If none is found, INSTR holds a value of zero and you go back to the INPUT in line 20.

But, say you typed in 'rest', which does appear in the A$ string, INSTR would retain the value at which the first matching character occurs. Since that is 'R', you get a value of 10 because 'R' is the tenth letter in the A$ string. From there it's plain sailing; you branch to line 50, to whatever routine you've written to deal with that particular input.

Double Trouble

Q I have recently been fortunate enough to acquire a second 1541 disk drive in good working order and wish to know how I can integrate it into my 64 system as part of a dual-drive unit.

It is, at the moment, another 0 unit with a device number 8, as is my other drive. Can you help me, please?
Alan Shadrack, W. Yorks.

A You should be wary of getting mixed up between 'dual-drive' units which have two drives both in the same box, and two 'single-drive' units which are independent of each other.

Take a tip from us, Tommy's Tips are the best. When it comes to answering your technical and programming queries, whether they're on the 64, 128, 16 or Plus/4, Tommy's your man. Go on, write to him: Tommy's Tips, Commodore User, 30-32 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU.

In the former case the whole unit is device 8, with drives 0 and 1. In the case of two single drives they are both drive 0 with device numbers 8 and 9 respectively.

Software that will work with 'dual-drives' is unlikely to work with two single drives and vice-versa. There is some software available for the 64 that will allow both combinations, but this is rare. If you want to connect two 1541s to the computer at the same time then you must change the device number of the second drive from 8 to 9. If you don't fancy taking the top off the drive then there is a way of doing it through software. This is explained on page 39 of the 1541 manual.

It is laborious to do every time you want to use the computer since you have to turn the second drive on, change the device number, then turn the first drive on, otherwise the software can't distinguish between the drives.

By far the best way is to change the links inside the second drive so that it always powers up as device 9. The procedure is explained on page 40 of the manual; it involves cutting a small metal link between two D-shaped solder 'pads'. However, there are different versions of the disk drive and the position of the pads can vary. Older machines have the pads on the left-hand edge (looking from the front) while newer drives have them near the middle. If yours is on the left-hand edge then cut the rear one; if in the middle then cut the one nearest the front.

After cutting the link it is possible, if you have a soldering iron, to solder a small piece of wire to each pad and then to a switch. If you then cut a hole in the side of the case to mount the switch you can change the device number between 8 and 9 without removing the top again. If you do fit a switch, only operate it when the unit is not powered up.

Game for ideas

Q I have been looking through program listings in magazines for ideas on writing my own games on the Commodore 64. On quite a few occasions I've come across the following lines:

POKE198,2:POKE631,13:LOAD

I'm totally baffled by all this. Could you please tell me what's going on?
Mark Wallace, Rugby.

A Address 198 is the count of the number of characters in the keyboard buffer, while addresses 631 to 640 form the keyboard buffer area itself.

What this bit of code does therefore is to tell the computer that there are two characters in the keyboard buffer and then put the value 13 (ASCII carriage return character) into the first location of the buffer. This has the same effect as if the RETURN key had been pressed, but without needing to involve the user.

As to why it is done, this will tend to depend very much on the program itself, since the same method can be used to poke RUN or any other command directly into the keybard buffer to produce some sort of 'auto' effect.

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Hot Shots!

By Mike Pattenden

There's something crawling over my desk leaving a horrible trail of slime in its wake. Uurgh! It's a big juicy piece of gossip.

Oh dear it's so slimy I'm repulsed — I daren't touch it. I'll tell you instead that **Martech** are putting out a Samantha Fox game complete with digitised pictures of Sam in varying stages of undress.

Last time such a game was released (**Strip Poker**) retailers Smiths refused to stock it. No such luck this time. It seems sexy Sam's cheery face has won them over.

I think I'll stick to playing with my pet person. Erm, wait a minute, that doesn't sound right . . .

• • •

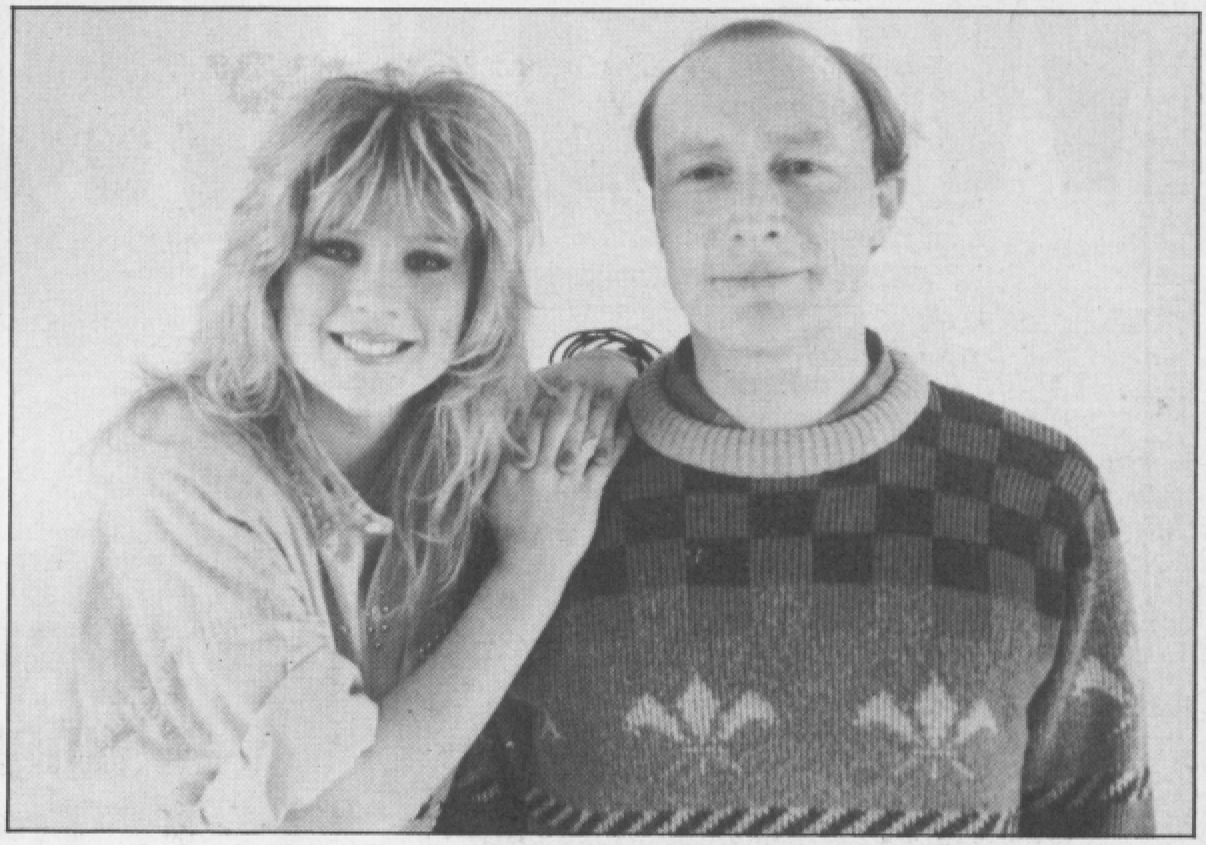
Meanwhile at the lavish launch of **The Force** (slagged in this month's Screen Scene as I predicted) PR man **Dave Carlos** was given a hard time. Hecklers fired a barrage of questions at him concerning pickets and written confessions. Hotshots kept a discreet distance from the trendy militants and instead snuffled the real truffles. First, that the game was — as I jokily suggested it should be — tested at **Hendon** on trainee coppers, and second, that **Scotland Yard**, when asked, refused to touch the game with a riot shield "because of its violent connotations". Shurley shume mishtake . . .

• • •

Over at **Hewson** (they've dropped the **Consultants** bit) everyone is in a very good mood. **Uridium** is selling like nobody's business. **Andrew Braybrook** the game's programmer is relaxing by tweaking away at a special 128 version of his own which allows him continous fire and has an enhanced background. This is a bit of habit it seems. He also has a special edition of **Paradroid** with the scroll rate souped up. Boss Andrew Hewson hinted that these and other tweaked versions might yet see the light of day on a special compilation . . .

Tony Crowther has rejoined **Alligata** full-time as a programmer. Perhaps he folded up because of the terrible slagging he got from industry gob Bruce Everiss. I suppose poor Tony threw a William Wobbler . . .

"Fancy a few hands then Sam?" asks 'Dirty Dave' Martin.



Over at **Elite** things are so hectic; what with Commando on the C16 and all those arcade games conversions that they are trying to discover why a package filled with a few cassette inlays and **Steve Wilcox's** lunch came to be waiting for a DHL courier to take it to S. Africa . . .

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Mikro Gen are also having a few packaging problems. Their games keep disappearing in the post. We're not "casting any doubts on the honesty of the staff of the GPO", said a representative, adding "but the packages do carry the company logo". Sounds a bit wallyish to me . . .

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Fame. In honour of my services to the industry a new software company has been formed to pump more compilations on to the market. The collection is flatteringly entitled **Hotshots**. Games on it include **Shadowfire, Gyron** and **Fighting Warrior**.

• • •

More fame. Well defame really. An oblique reference to me appeared in one of the lesser Commodore mags (the one with the international flavour) suggesting I had had to descend to ripping something off from Zzit. My word, times would have to be hard for that! The piece in question was the PPLO ransom note. The group sent one to us and one to the other aforementioned rag. They didn't bother with the rest. Awww . . .

Software development company **Softstone** have a static electricity problem. The house responsible for numerous conversions and most importantly this month's cover game, **Super Bowl**, have a cupboard full of dead 64s to testify to the problem. I doubted them until I picked up a joystick and got a shock that made my hair stand on end . . .

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One of the other games that Softstone were responsible for was **A View to a Kill**. They try to keep it a secret. Apparently it was a constant struggle because **Domark** gave them a very exacting brief on the game. Some very strange ideas came up including a suggestion that you have to avoid dog turds when you pursue the Grace Jones figure. Taste just isn't Domark's strong point, but they really would have put their foot in it then . . .

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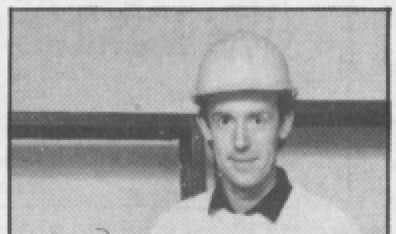
American Football mania is high at **Ocean** currently. Director John Woods — responsible for the game's development — has picked up a nickname in the process. He's now known as 'the **Refrigerator**' . . .

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Whilst we're at Ocean I can tell you **Knightrider** has a firm release date (to miss). You may remember first seeing adverts for it way back in '85 well since then three different programmers have tried and failed to follow Ocean's 3D brief.

With that awe inspiring piece of information I leave you to wait next month for another thrilling installment of Hotshots . . .

Virgin's Nick Alexander demonstrates the only way to clean up with his F.A. Cup game.



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